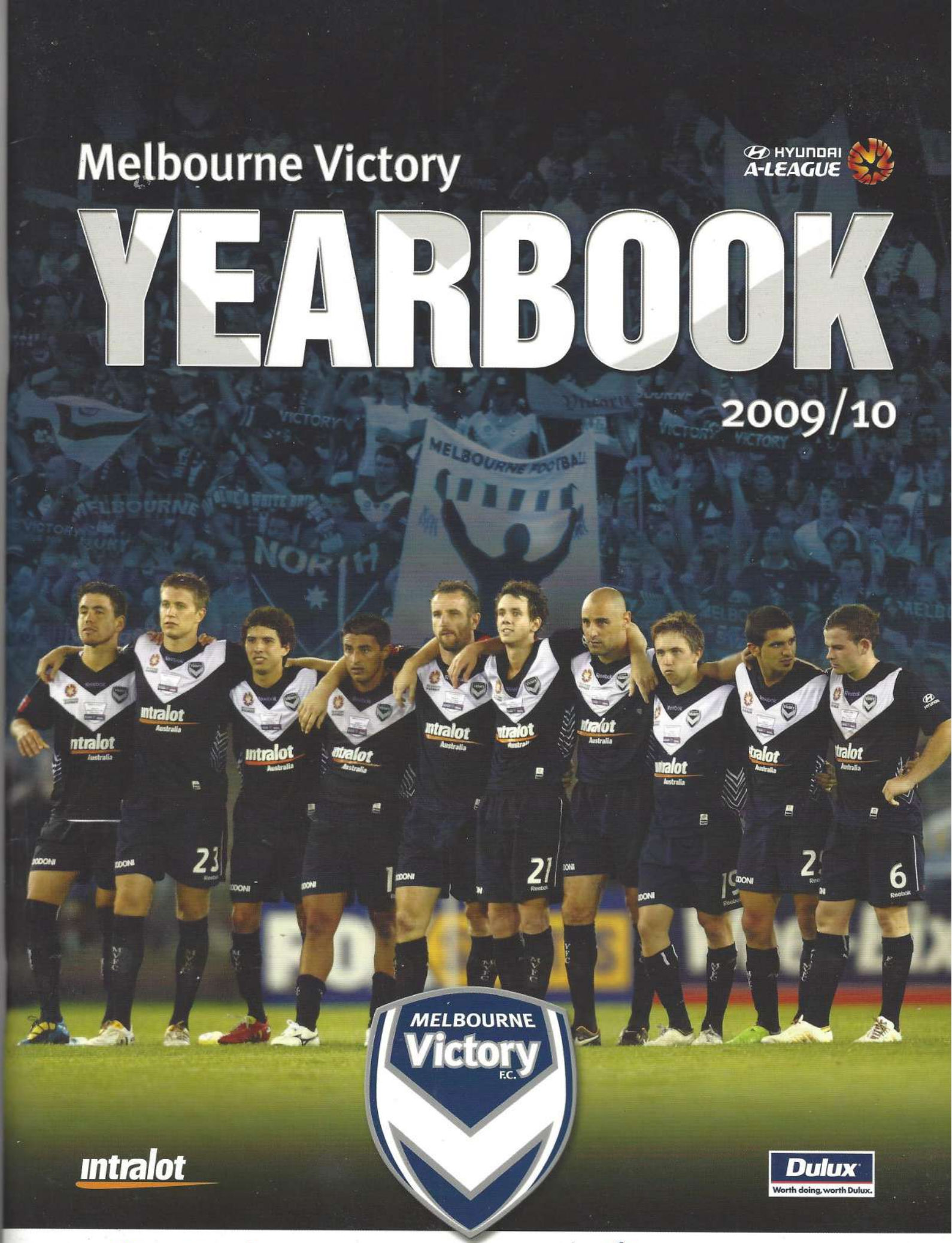
Melbourne Victory

HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE

YEARBOOK

2009/10



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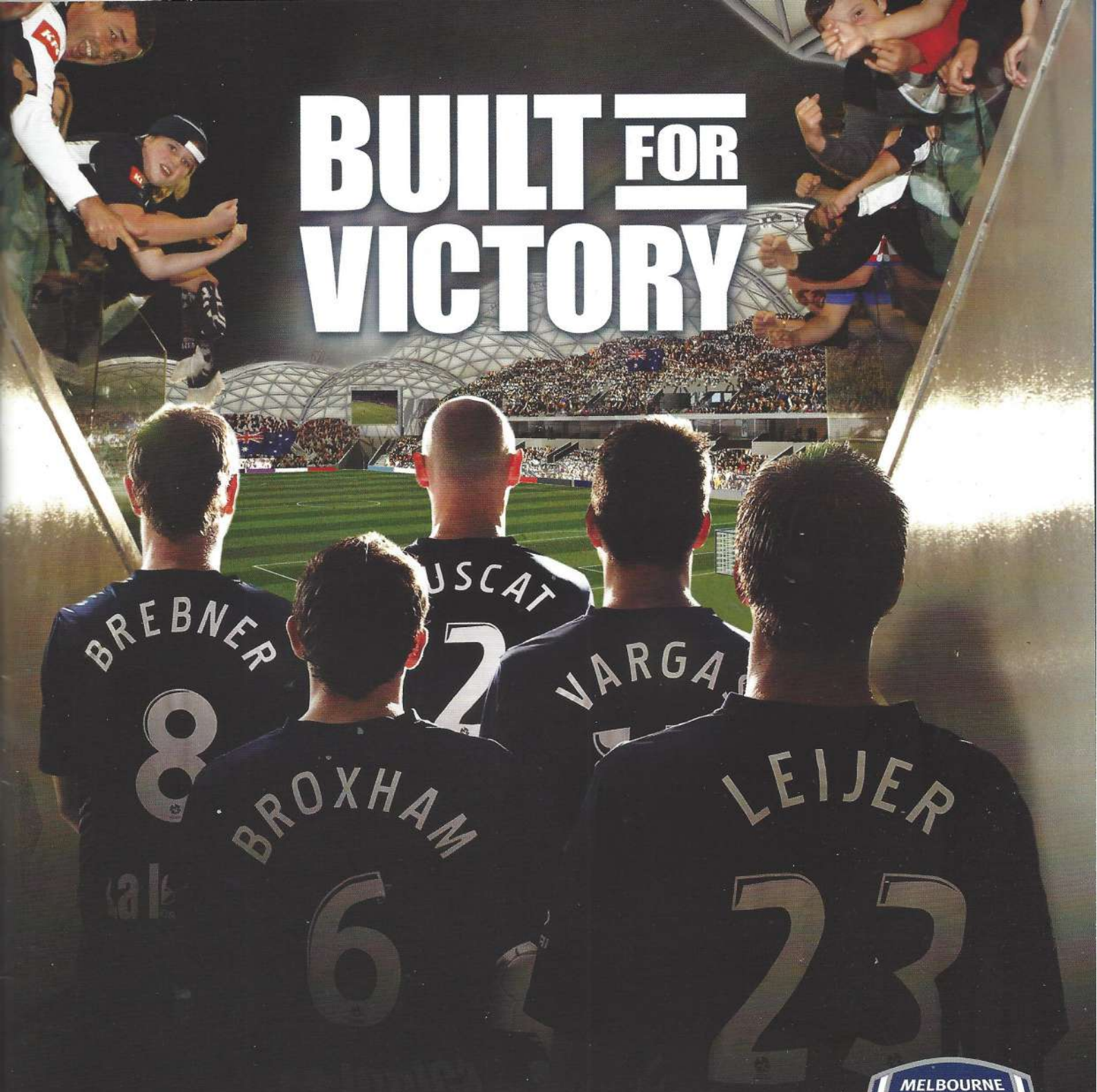

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HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE

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Chairman's Message

The season that has passed was one of highs and lows and culminated in us assessing the year as...so close, yet so far.

In chasing back-to-back Premiership and Championship glory, the team showed enormous character right the way through a testing campaign to just fall at the final hurdle in both key games against arch-rivals Sydney FC.

But while we suffered the disappointment of a trophy-less season, all was certainly not lost. Our Grand Final appearance secured another berth in the lucrative AFC Champions League (ACL) for 2011, which is another terrific achievement for all concerned.

It was extremely pleasing to see a sharp increase in membership from 2008/09, with 19,852 of our faithful committing to the club for the season. There's no doubt that our members are the Hyundai A-League's most loyal and passionate. The support you provide is immeasurable and very much appreciated.

To witness another home Grand Final to a packed Etihad Stadium was a real highlight. When Adrian Leijer headed home a late equaliser, the atmosphere was extraordinary and you could feel the electricity buzzing through the stands. A penalty shoot-out is a terrible way to decide a championship, but nevertheless our boys held their heads high and were gracious in defeat.

The AFC Champions League proved a real test of attrition, with tough scheduling and a string of crippling injuries conspiring to bring about a premature end to our campaign. Although we showed glimpses of what we're capable of, Asia definitely presents us with a completely new challenge and with another campaign under our belts, we'll be far better equipped next time round.

Our Youth team further highlights the amazing progress the club has made over the past few seasons. Despite narrowly missing the finals, a few more very talented young men were unearthed and I look forward to following their progress, as they make the transition from National Youth League to the Hyundai A-League.

Melbourne Victory's Westfield Women's League side also had an encouraging season, falling just short of finals qualification during the last round in Canberra. But, with Melissa Barbieri captaining the Matilda's during their Asian Cup winning campaign in May, there were still plenty of positives to come out of our women's program.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and shareholders I want to take the opportunity to credit Head Coach Ernie Merrick and the players for another quality season. I also want to thank the office staff, who keep the club functioning at an optimum level on a daily basis.

I would like to express our gratitude to our principal partner Intralot and major partners La Ionica, KFC, The Age and TAC. The support we receive from our sponsors is extremely important and we greatly appreciate their contribution.

It would be remiss of me not to mention some of the players who left us over the past 12 months. Inaugural squad member Danny Allsopp moved on early in the season – leaving only two original squad members in Kevin Muscat and Archie Thompson. Ney Fabiano, a member of our 2008/09 Championship team returned to Thailand. Mitchell Langerak's transformation from talented youngster to Number 1 between the posts, was quite remarkable. Not surprisingly German giants Borussia Dortmund were soon in hot pursuit of his services, and we reluctantly had to let him chase his European dream. We wish all of these players the very best of luck and I know the whole club will track their progress with interest.

Season 2010/11 promises to be the biggest yet and we look forward to not only life in our new home AAMI Park, but also an increased interest in the game, following unprecedented Australian support of the FIFA World Cup.

AAMI Park was built for Victory and more specifically for you, the fans. For the first time in Melbourne's history, we finally have a state-of-the-art, purpose-built football facility, and we as a club intend to make it a blue and white fortress. The experience will be unparalleled and seats at this amazing venue are in heavy demand, so don't miss out.

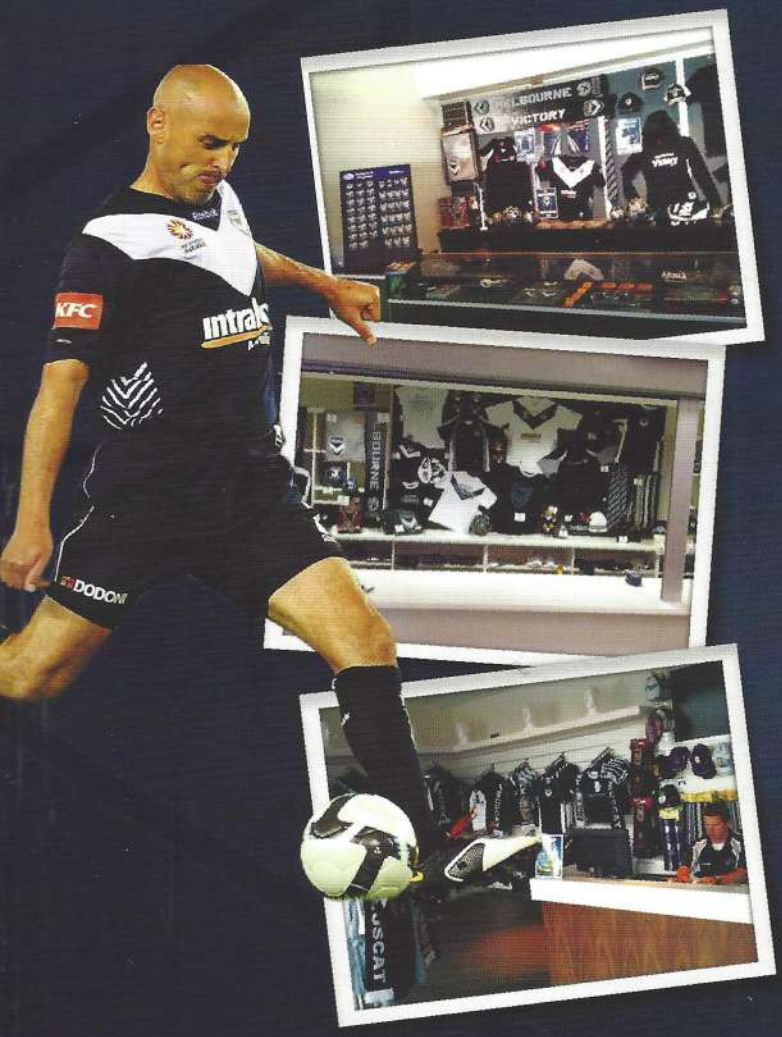
Finally, I would like to thank you, the members. Your support has been unwavering from day one and without you this club would not be the success story it is today. With exciting times ahead, I hope you'll join us once again, as we strive for more success, both domestically and in Asia.

Best regards,

Geoff Lord
Chairman

KIT UP AT THE VICTORY SHOP AT AAMI PARK

Buy direct and support the club. As 2010/11 members you are entitled to receive a 10%* discount on all Melbourne Victory merchandise with presentation of your membership card.



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CEO's Message

Thank you to every Melbourne Victory member for your invaluable contribution during a demanding season. Your membership allows us to support our players and coaching staff to maximize our on field potential, and of course, strong match night attendance by our members is always a great boost for our players.

Our sponsors, commercial partners and community stakeholders are greatly valued by Melbourne Victory and critical to our growth. I would like to thank our principal partner, Intralot; major partners, La Ionica, KFC, TAC and The Age; Westfield Women's League sponsor, Clear Solar; and media partners, ABC Radio, SEN 1116 and NOVA who gave us great support, and generated new interest from a growing fan base.

Our heavy schedule of games including Hyundai A-League (HAL) finals and our Asian Champions League campaign was accommodated by Melbourne Stadiums Ltd at Etihad Stadium, and we value their ongoing support.

Our community involvement included sponsorship of the Victorian Primary Schools Sports Association Football competition, charity partnerships with The Smith Family and Zaidees Rainbow Foundation, player appearances and free clinics for over 10,000 youngsters, support of priority Football Federation Australia (FFA) and Football Federation Victoria (FFV) development programs and events, and our UNITE game against Sydney FC in partnership with the Victorian Multicultural Commission. We thank FFA and FFV for their support of the game at the grassroots in Victoria and Melbourne Victory.

Our partnership with FFV in both our Westfield Womens League (WWL) and National Youth League (NYL) teams is greatly valued and unique in Australian football. Thank you to all FFV administration, events and football staff for the roles they played in supporting both teams. The State Government continue to provide fantastic support for our game at all levels, and their investment in AAMI Park and ongoing support of Melbourne Victory is greatly appreciated.

There are many who work selflessly for Melbourne Victory including our Directors, led by Chairman, Geoff Lord, our volunteers and advisory committees. I also thank our administration staff, consultants and contractors; Max Events and Marketing, Soccer Fever, and Belgravia Group. Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust gave us excellent support with training facilities, and Monash University also greatly assisted with facilities for both our HAL and NYL players.

Our WWL and NYL teams continued their improvement, with Melbourne Victory women just missing the finals, and we are very proud of the achievement of Melissa Barbieri as the Westfield Matildas captain.

To get within 1 point of the HAL premiership, and penalty kicks of the championship, during a season marked by untimely injuries to key players was a credit to our coach, Ernie Merrick, his support staff, captain, Kevin Muscat and our squad.

We look forward to the season ahead for all our teams, the anticipation of our new home at AAMI Park and to doing our best to make your experience as a Melbourne Victory member an enjoyable and rewarding one.

Warm Regards,

Geoff Miles
Chief Executive Officer

Coach's Report - Open Letter

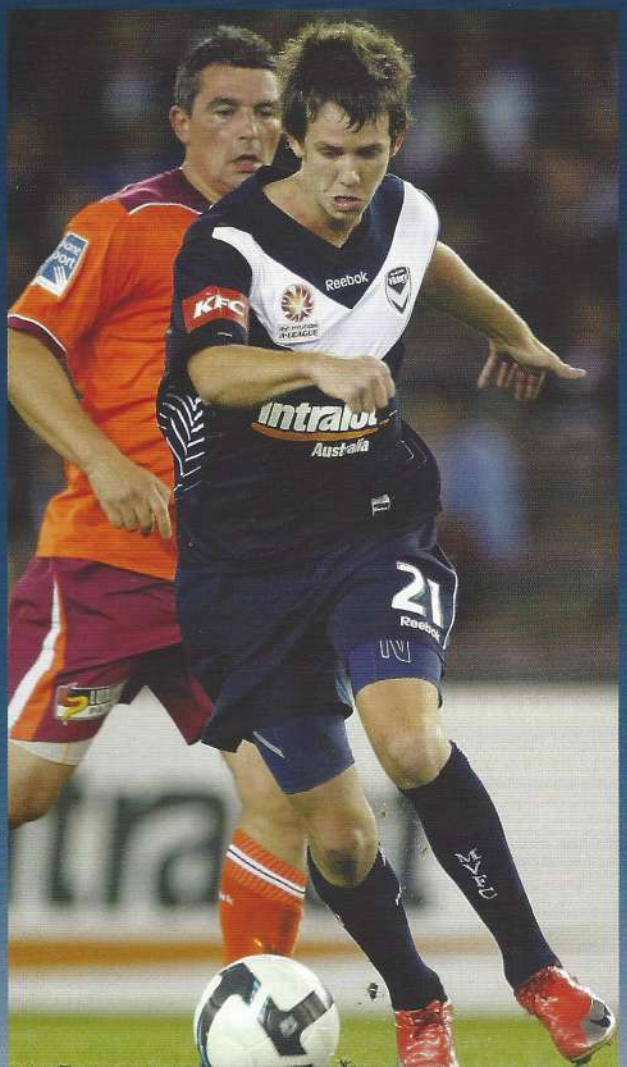
Dear Member,

First of all, I'd just like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support. Our fans are undoubtedly the best in the country and without you, this club wouldn't be the Hyundai A-League success story it is today. With an average home crowd of over 20-thousand, we continue to set the standard both on and off the pitch. Let's keep it that way in 2010/11.

As far as season's go, 2009/10 was certainly one of the more challenging I've encountered in my 5 years at Melbourne Victory.

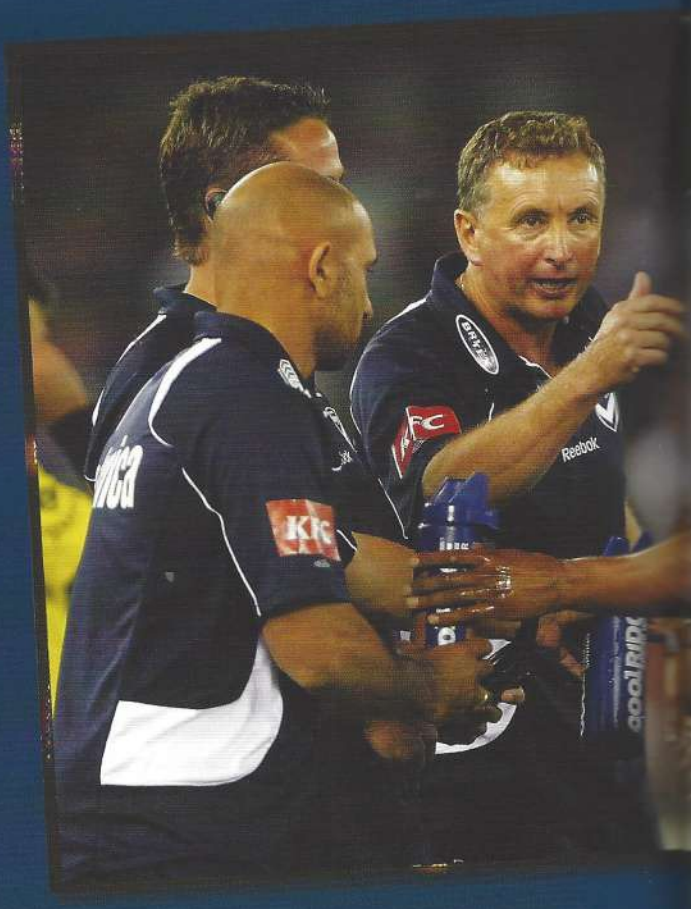
'So close, yet so far' seemed to sum it up.

Unfortunately we lost the Premiership to Sydney in the final round, and just 3 weeks later, we were denied our third Championship, losing the Grand Final on penalties to the same opponent – this time in front of a capacity crowd at Etihad Stadium.



I'm not one to make excuses, but the club suffered horribly with injuries last season. To achieve what we did was an unbelievable effort from the team. Three of our most influential players required knee reconstructions and they were sorely missed.

We lost midfield playmaker Billy Celeski in Round 5, then Matthew Kemp in Round 26, before Archie Thompson went down just minutes into the Grand Final.

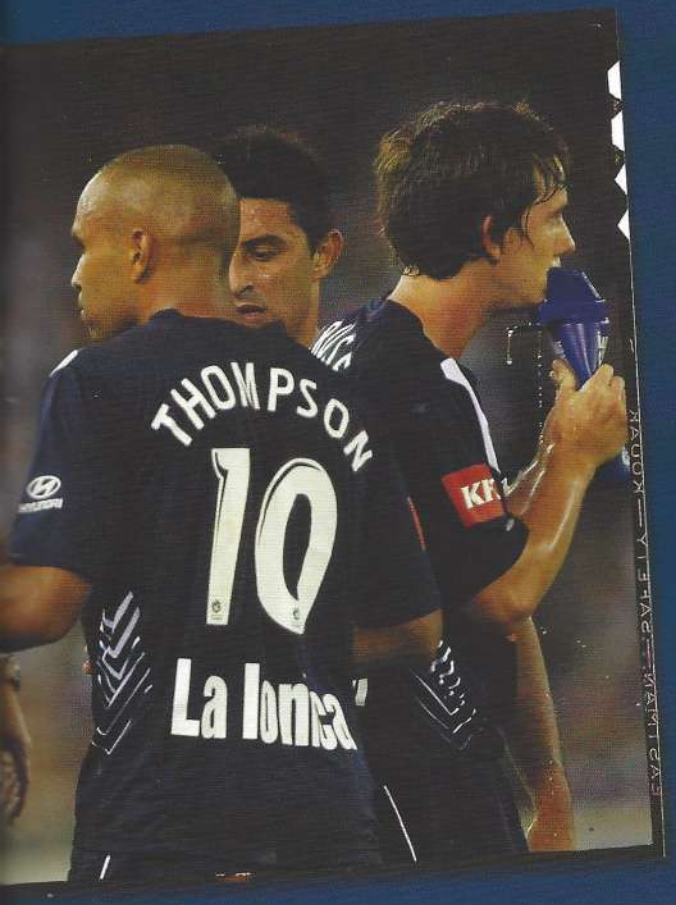


It's a testament to the squad that we were still highly competitive, but when you lose players of their class, in conjunction with plenty of others who had injury interrupted seasons, it's certainly telling.

Injuries though, give opportunities to others and we had more than a few young players make quite an impression during the season.

Robbie Kruse joined us from Brisbane Roar and immediately looked right at home, Mate Dugandzic scored a double in his first start against Adelaide United and 'Football Superstar' Luke Pilkington made a couple of cameos late in the season.

It was also a breakout season for goalkeeper, Mitch Langerak. The 21 year-old was a revelation between the posts after getting his chance in Round 15 against Brisbane Roar. Unfortunately though, his performances didn't go unnoticed. It wasn't long until European clubs came knocking and we reluctantly had to transfer him at season's end. We wish Mitch all the best at his new club Borussia Dortmund in Germany and look forward to seeing him in a Socceroos shirt soon.



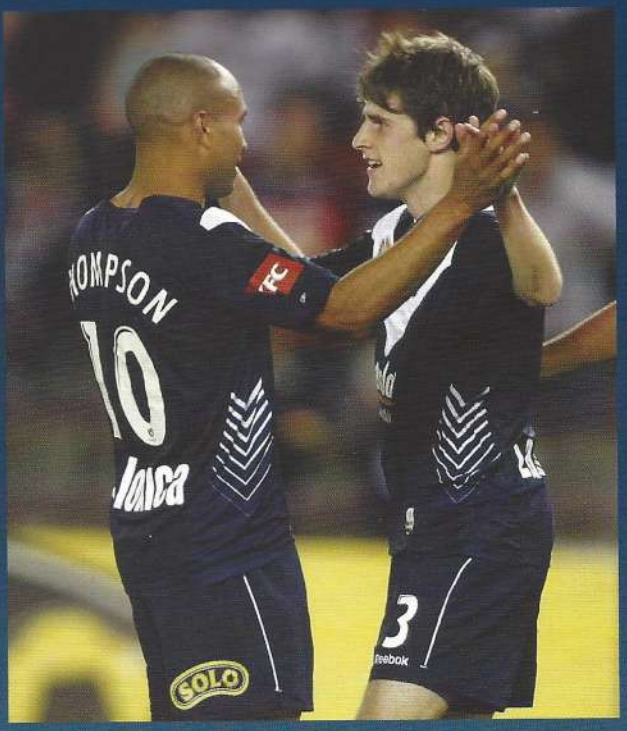
Season six of the Hyundai A-League promises to be an exciting one at our new home, AAMI Park. Let's hope it brings more success to the club and our supporters.

Personally, I feel we also have unfinished business in Asia and while the AFC Champions League scheduling looks tough, we're confident of a far more rewarding campaign this time round.

I must also offer my sincerest thanks to all our backroom staff, who worked tirelessly with the players and coaches. It was a long and demanding season, but the teamwork displayed both on and off the pitch could never be questioned.

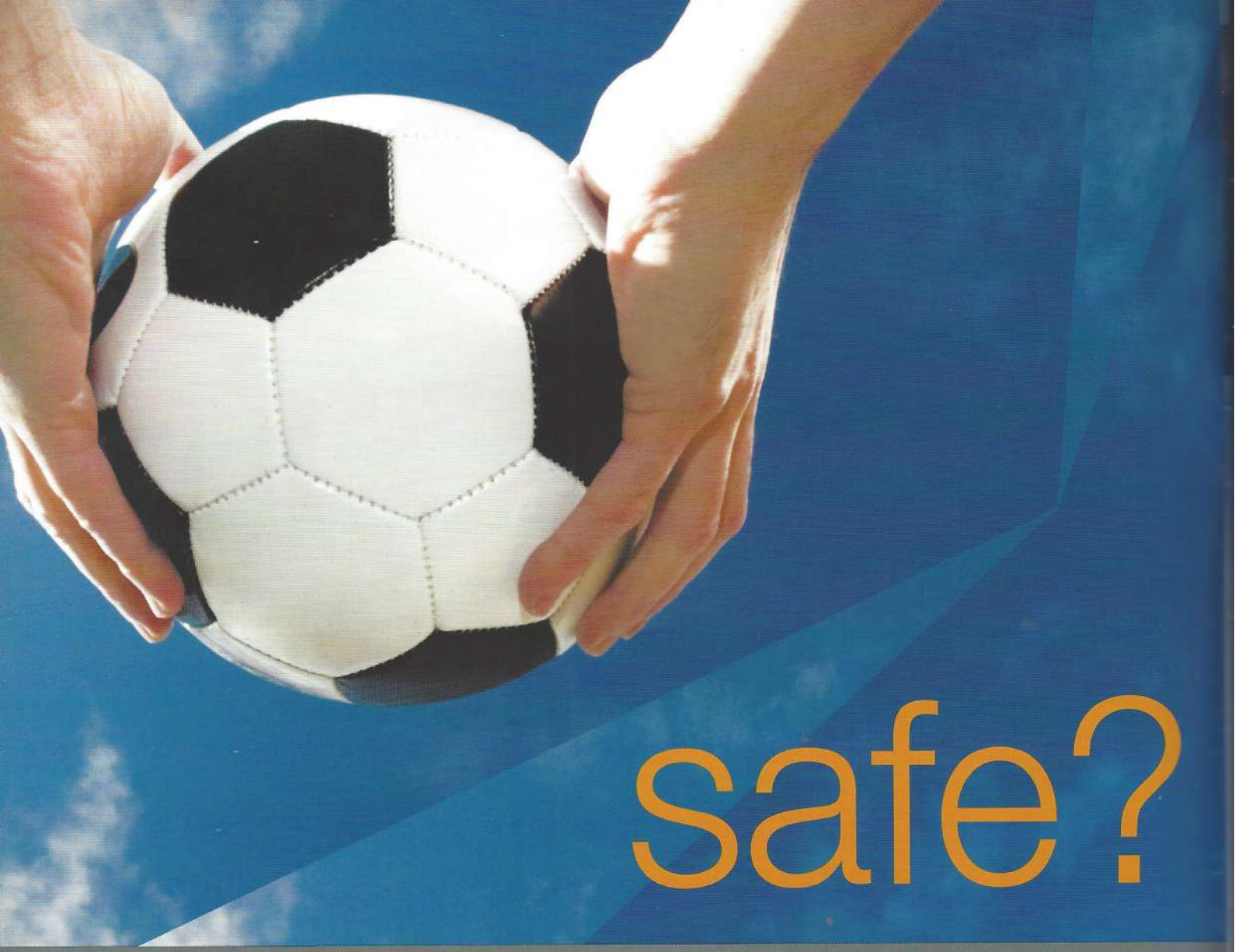
To the Chairman, Geoff Lord, the Board, C.E.O. Geoff Miles, and all the guys and girls in the office, your support has been pivotal to our success also - and for that I thank you!

Finally, to every single Melbourne Victory fan, next season is obviously a very important one for



the club. We know you'll embrace our new home at AAMI Park and continue to support the boys, as we strive to get ourselves back to the top.

Ernie Merrick.



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On Friday May 14, 2010, fans turned out at AAMI Park to pay tribute to Melbourne Victory skipper Kevin Muscat as Melbourne Victory defeated a FFA Come Play XI 4-0.

In the clubs inaugural game at AAMI Park, Muscat's good mate Tom Pondeljak stole the show, scoring two brilliant goals, including the first ever scored at Melbourne Victory's new home. Adrian Leijer and Semir Sivic scored the others, while the Melbourne fans got one last look at Mitch Langerak before his move to Germany.

It was the Sivic goal which demonstrated Muscat's marvelous qualities. With four minutes left, Evan Berger was brought down in the box, giving the skipper the chance to step up to the spot. But Muscat generously tapped it to the 22-year-old – who was forced to retire after a horrible run with injuries – to slide it home for a dream farewell.

Muscat relished his evening in the spotlight, watched on by great friends Craig Moore, Zeljko Kalac, Stan Lazaridis, Steve Corica and Tony Popovic.

The crowd was on their feet just after the hour, when Mitch Langerak was substituted in what was his last appearance for the club before joining German giant Borussia Dortmund. The young keeper embraced his team-mates as he departed the field.

Muscat then departed to a standing ovation, leaving fans to wonder if they'll see him in a Melbourne Victory shirt again or whether his first look at AAMI Park would in fact be his last.

Round 1

Melbourne Victory 0 - 2 **Central Coast Mariners**
(Simon 10', McGlinchey 15')

Thursday August 6, Etihad Stadium. Att: 18,855

Round 2

Melbourne Victory 3 - 3 **Brisbane Roar**
(Hernandez 33', 69', Allsopp 63') (Tiatto 22', Van Dijk 24', Henrique 36')

Saturday August 15, Etihad Stadium. Att: 18,503

Round 3

North Queensland 0 - 1 **Melbourne Victory**
(Thompson 45')

Saturday August 22, Dairy Farmers Stadium. Att: 6,514

Round 4

Perth Glory 2 - 1 **Melbourne Victory**
(Jelic 4', 54') (Thompson 9')

Friday August 28, Members Equity Stadium. Att: 8,057

Round 5

Melbourne Victory 1 - 1 **Newcastle Jets**
(Thompson 42') (Haliti 86')

Thursday September 3, Etihad Stadium. Att: 15,168

Round 6

Melbourne Victory 1 - 1 **Wellington Phoenix**
(Hernandez 4') (Brown 30')

Sunday September 13, Etihad Stadium. Att: 17,644

Round 7

Adelaide United 0 - 2 **Melbourne Victory**
(Ward 6', Brebner 90')

Friday September 18, Hindmarsh Stadium. Att: 15,058

Round 8

Gold Coast United 2 - 3 **Melbourne Victory**
(Culina 18', Porter 45') (Hernandez 22', Thompson 43', Muscat 86'p)

Saturday September 26, Skilled Park. Att: 5,063

Round 9

Melbourne Victory 2 - 1 **Brisbane Roar**
(Fabiano 3', Leijer 72') (Reinaldo 11')

Saturday October 3, Etihad Stadium. Att: 19,587

Round 10

Melbourne Victory 0 - 3 **Sydney FC**
(Brosque 14', Bridge 15', 19')

Friday October 9, Etihad Stadium. Att: 30,668

Round 11

Newcastle Jets 1 - 3 **Melbourne Victory**
(Haliti 22') (Thompson 61', Pondeljak 78', Hernandez 84')

Sunday October 18, EnergyAustralia Stadium. Att: 6,029

Round 12

Melbourne Victory 3 - 1 **Adelaide United**
(Dugandzic 18', 56', Leijer 89') (Hughes 64')

Saturday October 24, Etihad Stadium. Att: 21,182

Round 13

Perth Glory 1 - 2 **Melbourne Victory**
(Sterjovski 19') (C.Coyne 6' og, Hernandez 67')

Sunday November 1, Members Equity Stadium. Att: 10,035

Round 14

Melbourne Victory 0 - 4 **Central Coast Mariners**
(Kwasnik 15', Simon 75', Heffernan 80', Mrdja 84')

Saturday November 7, Etihad Stadium. Att: 18,531

Round 15

Brisbane Roar 0 - 1 **Melbourne Victory**
(Thompson 8')

Sunday November 21, Suncorp Stadium. Att: 9,904

Round 16

Melbourne Victory 4 - 0 **Gold Coast United**
(Kruse 28', Ward 45', Thompson 54', 68')

Saturday November 28, Etihad Stadium. Att: 20,537

Round 17

Wellington Phoenix 1 - 1 **Melbourne Victory**
(Brown 57') (Vargas 86')

Friday December 4, Westpac Stadium. Att: 8,200

Round 18

Central Coast Mariners 0 - 3 **Melbourne Victory**
(Hernandez 57', Kemp 71', Boogaard 77' og)

Saturday December 12, Bluetongue Stadium. Att: 7,571

Round 19

Melbourne Victory 0 - 0 **Sydney FC**

Saturday December 19, Etihad Stadium. Att: 27,344

Round 20

North Queensland 1 - 0 **Melbourne Victory**
(Daal 30')

Sunday December 27, Dairy Farmers Stadium. Att: 7,031

Round 21

Newcastle Jets 3 - 2 **Melbourne Victory**
(M.Thompson 25', Bridges 44', Haliti 55') (Muscat 44'p, Hernandez 90')

Sunday January 10, Energy Australia Stadium. Att: 6,979

Round 22

Melbourne Victory 6 - 2 **Perth Glory**
(Thompson 4', Kruse 12', 26', 39', Muscat 81'p Hernandez 82') (Vargas 19'og Sterjovski 52')

Saturday January 16, Etihad Stadium. Att: 20,448

Round 23

Melbourne Victory 2 - 0 **Adelaide United**
(Pondeljak 1', Muscat 90+4'p)

Saturday Janaury 23, Etihad Stadium. Att: 20,361

Round 24

Melbourne Victory 4 - 0 **Wellington Phoenix**
(Brown 16og', Thompson 50', Hernandez 66', Kemp 87')

Tuesday January 26, Etihad Stadium. Att: 18,819

Round 25

Gold Coast 1 - 0 **Melbourne Victory**
(Caravella 76')

Friday January 29, Skilled Park. Att: 7,249

Round 26

Melbourne Victory 2 - 0 **North Queensland**
(Hernandez 35', 66')

Friday February 5, Etihad Stadium. Att: 22,726

Round 27

Sydney FC 2 - 0 **Melbourne Victory**
(Kisel 34', Aloisi 49')

Sunday February 14, Sydney Football Stadium. Att: 25,407

Major Semi-Final – 1st Leg

Melbourne Victory 2 - 1 **Sydney FC**
(Mrdja 16', Hernandez 40') (Aloisi 42')

Thursday February 18, Etihad Stadium. Att: 18,453

Major Semi-Final – 2nd Leg

Sydney FC 2 - 2 **Melbourne Victory***
(Kisel 35'p, Bridge 54') (Kruse 15', Thompson 113')

*Melbourne Victory won 4-3 on aggregate.
Sunday March 7, Sydney Football Stadium. Att: 23,818

Grand Final

Melbourne Victory 1 - 1 **Sydney FC***
(Leijer 81') (Bridge 63')

*Sydney FC won 4-2 on penalties.
Saturday March 20, Etihad Stadium. Att: 44,560

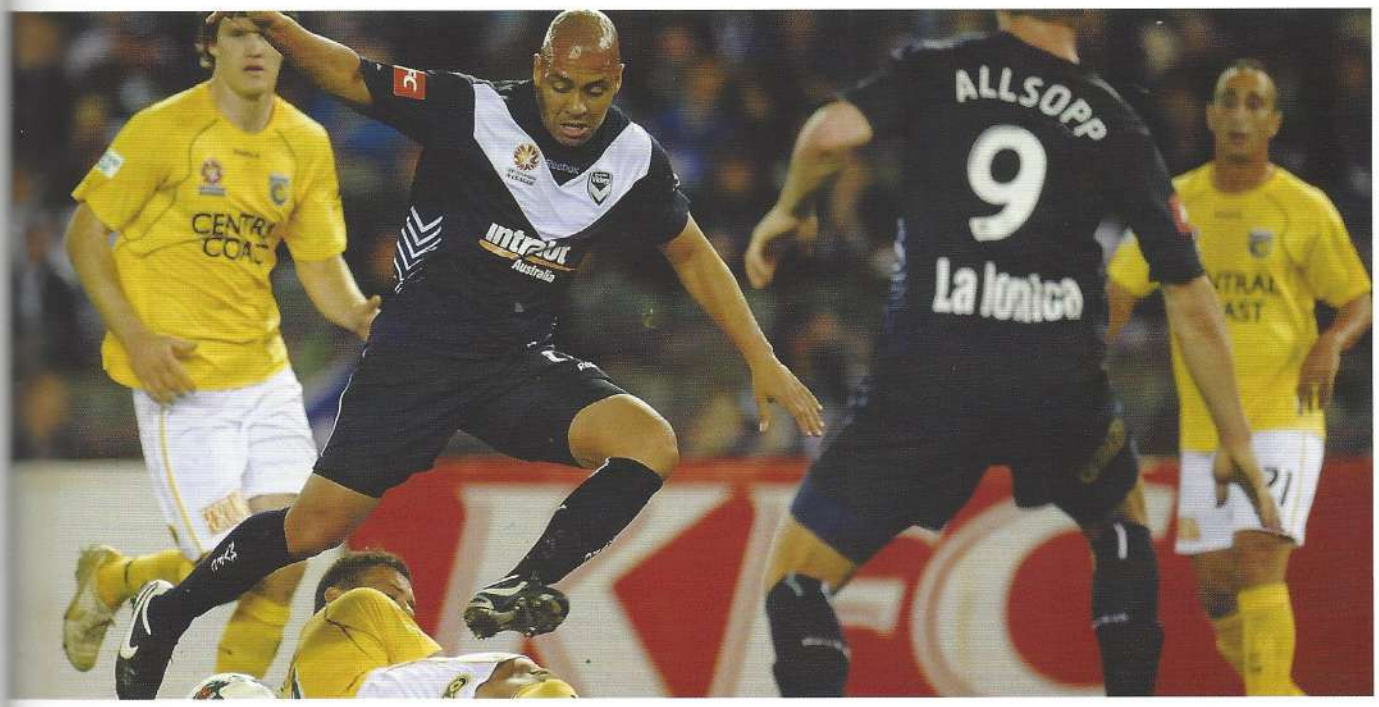
THURSDAY AUGUST 6, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 18,855

Melbourne Victory 0
Central Coast 2

Simon 10', McGlinchey 15'

Melbourne Victory opened its 2009/10 Premiership defence with a shock 2-0 home loss to Central Coast Mariners in front of a healthy mid-week crowd at Etihad Stadium.

recruit Michael McGlinchey looked covered by Moss but then took a wicked deflection off Victory defender Roddy Vargas to leave the keeper stranded and the Mariners celebrating a shock two-goal lead.



Melbourne made four changes to the starting line-up from the previous year's Grand Final win over Adelaide. New Zealand recruit Glen Moss replaced the departed Michael Theoklitos in goal while Grant Brebner, Leigh Broxham and Evan Berger covered for Nick Ward and Billy Celeski, who were on the bench, and Seb Ryall, who had moved to Sydney FC.

But unfortunately for Victory, Moss' first task for his new club was to pick the ball out of the net. The former Wellington Phoenix keeper had no chance when a free-kick from John Hutchison was not cleared by the Melbourne defence and fell invitingly for Matt Simon to smash home from close range in the 10th minute.

The Mariners then doubled their lead just five minutes later in even more fortunate circumstances. A long-range shot from Celtic

Melbourne looked far sharper after the break, with Carlos Hernandez almost curling a long-range shot home in the 47th minute before last year's Grand Final hero, Tom Pondeljak came close in the 58th when he shot over the bar.

Hernandez came even closer with a rasping shot in the 65th minute, but despite constant pressure, the Mariners defence held firm.

SATURDAY AUGUST 15, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 18,603

Melbourne Victory 3

Hernandez 33'/69', Allsopp 63'

Brisbane Roar 3

Tiatto 22', Van Dijk 24', Henrique 36'

The brilliance of Danny Allsopp and Carlos Hernandez helped Melbourne Victory's Hyundai A-League campaign spring to life in a stunning 3-3 shoot-out against the Brisbane Roar at Etihad Stadium.

Hernandez was dangerous all night, having opened Victory's account with a brilliant effort from just outside the box in the 33rd minute.

Victory showed great tenacity to recover after the Roar had silenced the local crowd with first half goals from Danny Tiatto, Sergio van Dijk and Henrique in an exhilarating 14-minute burst.

A shell-shocked Melbourne hit back when Nick Ward, shifted to right back in Kevin Muscat's absence, crossed to Hernandez, who thundered the ball home from just outside the box.

Victory appeared to have regained its composure but that changed in the 36th minute when Henrique's run down the left and brilliance to deceive three defenders resulted in a superb goal from just outside the box.

Victory lifted its intensity after the break and the renewed focus paid off in the 63rd minute when Allsopp superbly volleyed a pass from Hernandez that had rebounded off the head of Roar defender Luke Devere.

Hernandez then sent his team-mates into raptures when his powerful strike curled past goalkeeper Liam Reddy and into the right side of the net to level things up.

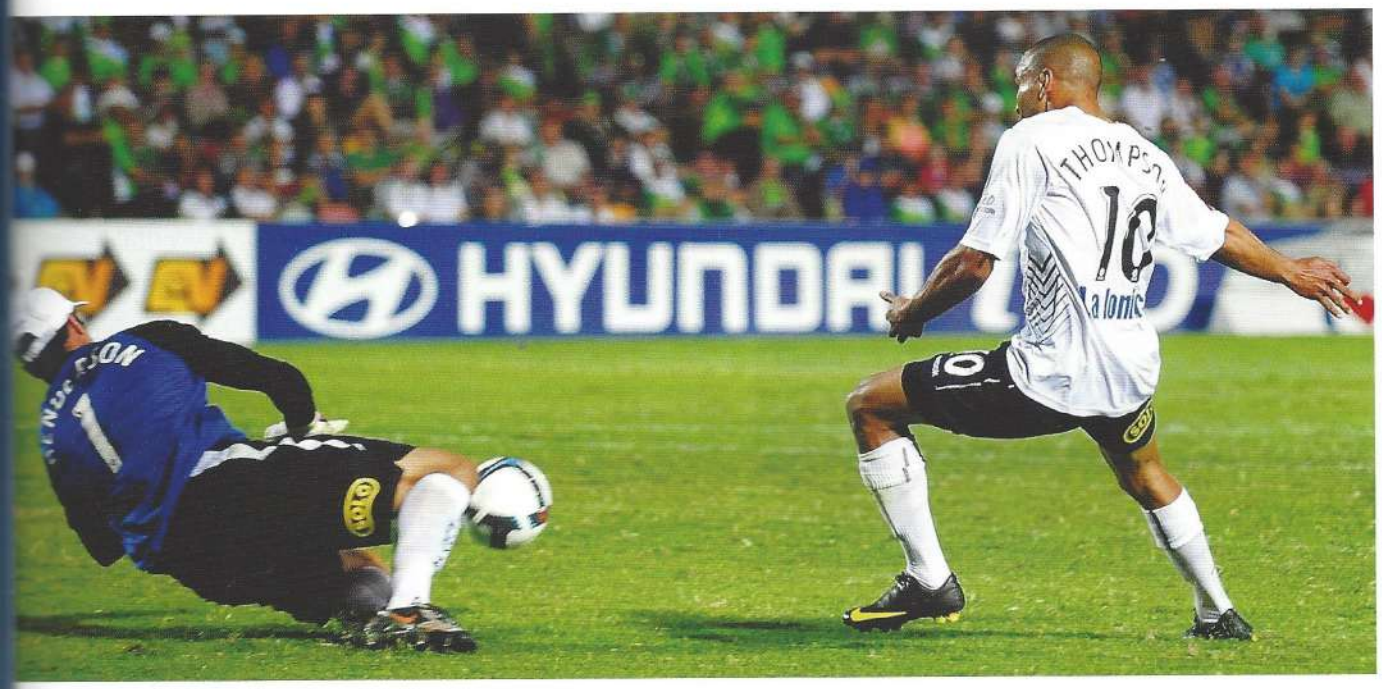
SATURDAY AUGUST 22, DAIRY FARMERS STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 6,514

North Queensland Fury 0

Melbourne Victory 1

Thompson 45'

Melbourne Victory secured its first win of the 2009/10 Hyundai A-League campaign thanks to an Archie Thompson goal up in Townsville.



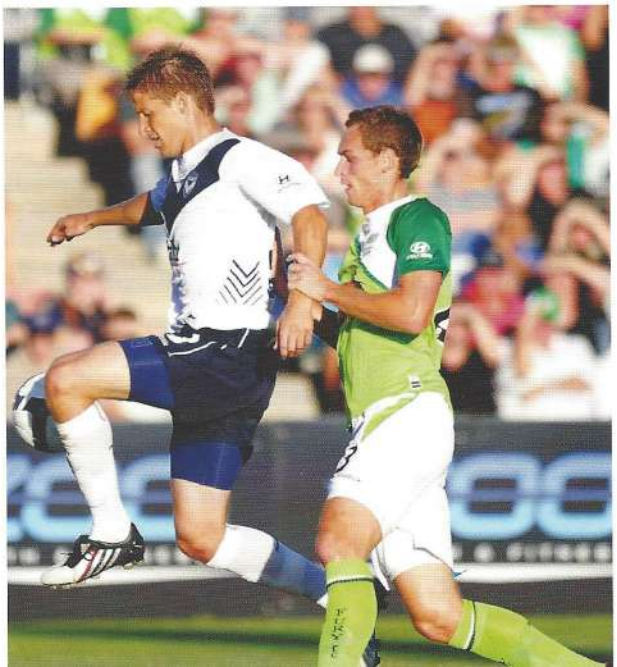
It wasn't the most authoritative of performances from Melbourne but the win was just reward for the quality of chances created by the visitors, with Thompson hammering home the only goal of the game in the final minute of the first half.

North Queensland began better with Shane Stefanutto testing out Glen Moss from range twice in the opening 20 minutes.

After several promising attacking moves, most of which involved veteran midfielder Tom Pondeljak, the goal finally came. Adrian Leijer showcased his class with a brilliant long ball which found Thompson. The striker trapped it well and fired accurately with his left foot on the stroke of half time for his first goal of the season.

The opening 15 minutes of the second half produced far more attacking and both sides should really have had goals in that period. Danny Allsopp and Thompson combined superbly to put Thompson one-on-one with Paul Henderson, but his shot allowed the keeper to get down low and save.

North Queensland pressed hard for an equaliser, with Robbie Fowler, David Williams and McBreen all trying their hand, but their efforts were in vain as Melbourne secured all three points.



FRIDAY AUGUST 28, MEMBERS EQUITY STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 8,057

Perth Glory 2
Jelic 4'/54'

Melbourne Victory 1
Thompson 9'

A Branko Jelic double foiled Melbourne's hopes of securing back-to-back Hyundai A-League victories, with Perth Glory recording its fourth consecutive home win over Victory at Members Equity Stadium.

Jelic netted goals from close range at the beginning of either half with Archie Thompson's ninth-minute goal not enough for Melbourne to take any points from a match it dominated during the first forty-five minutes.

From a fifth-minute free kick, Chris Coyne was able to rise unattended in the box and his header found Mile Sterjovski, who pulled the trigger. The shot trickled through and Jelic was able to toe in from a matter of inches.

Melbourne was stunned into action and after Danny Allsopp fired wide, Carlos Hernandez opened up the Perth defence with a superb angled pass, which found Allsopp on the left. His cross found Thompson, whose first shot was blocked by a desperate Naum Sekulovski. But the rebound fell at the striker's feet for an easy finish, and after nine minutes it was 1-1.

Ten minutes into the second half, Scott Neville fired in a cross, Sterjovski headed on goal and Jelic was there to net his second from close range.

A hobbling Hernandez and Surat Sukha were replaced by Grant Brebner and Matthew Foschini, who made his Victory debut. Perth then put up the shutters in order to secure all three points, meaning Melbourne was forced to shoot from range. Tom Pondeljak, Allsopp and Billy Celeski all tried to test out Velaphi, but had no success.

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 3, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 15,168

Melbourne Victory	1
Thompson 42'	
Newcastle Jets	1
Haliti 86'	

Melbourne Victory was left still searching for its first home win of the 2009/10 Hyundai A-League season after conceding a late equaliser against Newcastle Jets at Etihad Stadium.

The 1-1 draw was also marred by a season ending knee injury to midfield playmaker Billy Celeski, who was carried from the field on a stretcher in the third minute.

Victory looked to have secured all 3 points, but lost concentration and was caught out by an 86th minute header from Newcastle substitute Labinot Haliti.

Defender Roddy Vargas had Melbourne's first clear cut chance in the 27th minute when he almost appeared surprised to have a free header in the box only to put it wide.

But despite dominating possession the breakthrough did not come for Melbourne until the 42nd minute when Leigh Broxham floated in a perfect free-kick from the right, with Archie Thompson the only player to attack and he sent a pinpoint header into the far corner of the net.

It was the least Melbourne deserved for a dominant first half but the Jets were more of a handful after the break.

Glen Moss was forced into a good save at close range from Jason Hoffman in the 63rd minute

and after Ney Fabiano had a shout for a penalty refused in the 84th, the Jets stole a point their performance scarcely deserved, when Haliti headed home from close range after a good cross from the right by Tarek Elrich to leave Victory with just five points from five matches.

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 13, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 17,644

Melbourne Victory 1
Hernandez 4'

Wellington Phoenix 1
Brown 30'

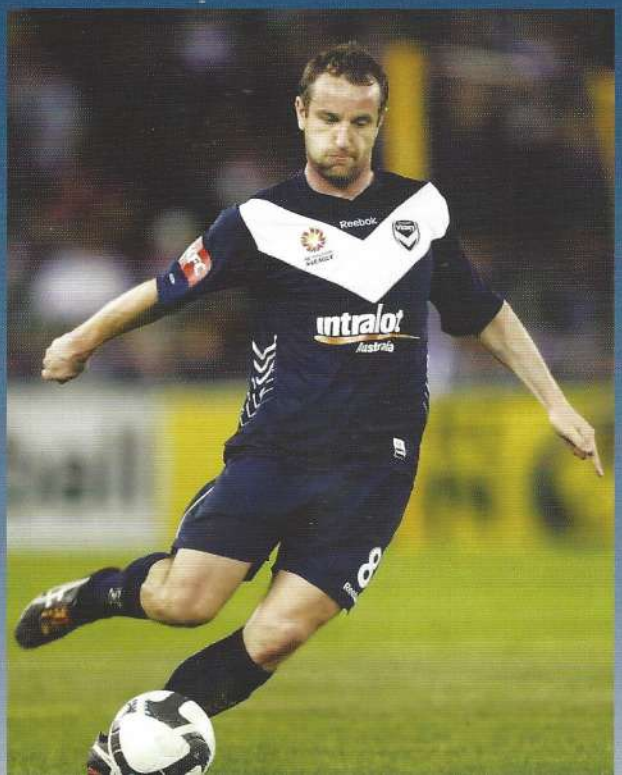
Victory's slow start to the season continued, playing out it's second successive draw – this time against Wellington Phoenix.

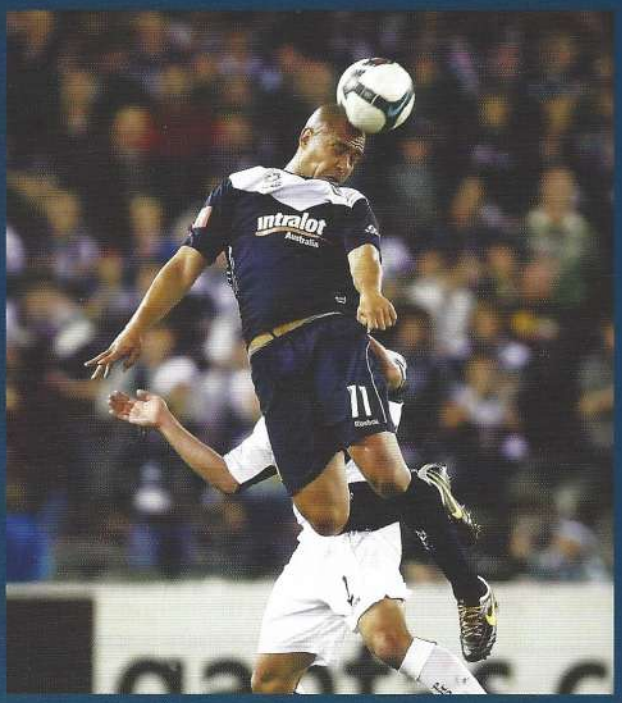
The home side started brighter and took the lead inside four minutes when Carlos Hernandez fired home from 30m but Tim Brown found an equaliser for Phoenix on the half-hour mark and neither team was able to break the deadlock from then on, as each took a point.

The fans were cheering early when former Victory player Vince Lia brought down Ney Fabiano and Hernandez nonchalantly stepped up and curled it past Mark Paston and into the net.

After a quarter of an hour of limited chances the game came to life when a superb Chris Greenacre cross was met by Daniel at the front of the box but Glen Moss blocked the volley and then grabbed the loose ball.

Having begun to win more of the ball the Phoenix finally hit back in the 30th minute when Paul Ifill and Greenacre put Daniel into the clear and he pulled it back to the near post, where Ifill headed





it on for Brown to knock it in from the front of the six-yard box.

In the final 10 minutes of the half both teams had a couple of chances, Wellington's skipper firing a full-blooded header straight at Moss who just tipped it over the bar, before Thompson just failed to control the ball after being put clear by Hernandez.

Six minutes after the break and a free kick from Leo Bertos was deflected wide by the wall before Jon McKain's subsequent corner found an unmarked Brown but he was unable double his haul, sending his free header wide from close range.

Victory's mid-week recruit Robbie Kruse came on after 58 minutes for Ney Fabiano, before Ifill wrong-footed Leigh Broxham and skipped into the box but pulled his shot back across goal and narrowly wide with no one waiting at the far post.

Victory had one last chance to score in the dying seconds when Matthew Kemp and Thompson combined to get the ball to Hernandez in the box but his cross was met by an offside Grant Brebner whose shot flew wide regardless.

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18, HINDMARSH STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 15,058

Adelaide United 0

Melbourne Victory 2

Ward 6', Brebner 90'

Goals from Nick Ward and Grant Brebner helped Melbourne secure its seventh-straight win over Adelaide and its second for the season.

Looking for its first points against Melbourne since the 2007/08 season, Adelaide threw everything forward in the final ten minutes.

The deployment of Nick Ward into a more advanced role paid dividends just six minutes in, albeit with a bit of fortune attached. Adrian Leijer released him down the right and outpacing Mark Rudan, Ward delivered a cross which turned into a shot. Eugene Galekovic was completely caught out, the ball snuck in at the near post and Melbourne had the lead.

It gave Melbourne the confidence to play its best football in a few weeks, with smooth passing and quick movement, a hallmark of an opening half hour which could have yielded another goal.

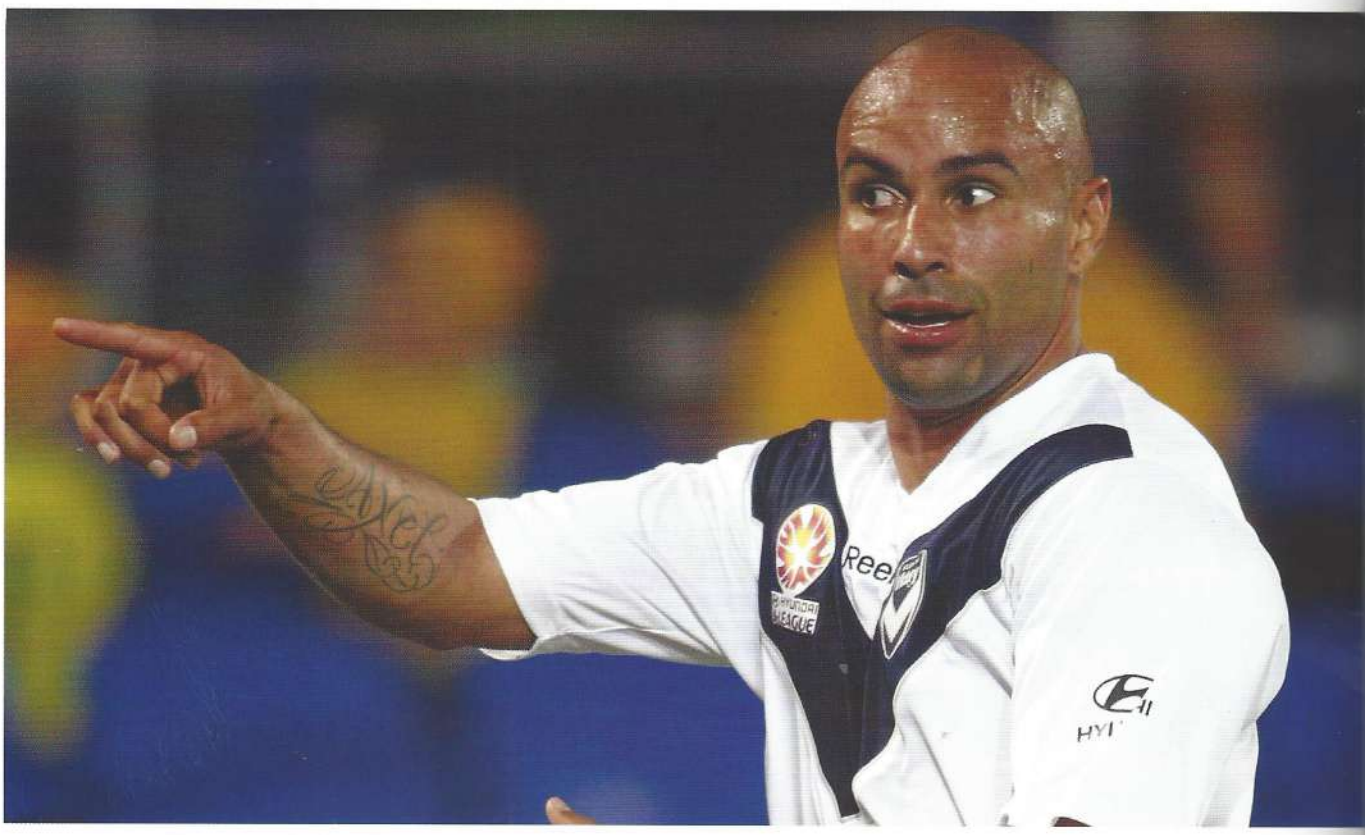
Adelaide came out with intent after the break, but its attacking play came to little, with Melbourne enjoying space on the counter-attack.

Matthew Kemp and Roddy Vargas, were doing an excellent job at the back with Glen Moss largely untroubled by Adelaide's strike force.

But it was Melbourne which secured the second goal when Archie Thompson picked the pocket of Cassio, ran the byline, hammered in a cross which rebounded to Grant Brebner, who couldn't miss.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26, SKILLED PARK. ATTENDANCE: 5,063

Gold Coast United	2
Culina 18', Porter 45'	
Melbourne Victory	3
Hernandez 22', Thompson 43', Muscat 86'p	



A late penalty from skipper Kevin Muscat sealed a valuable 3-2 win over Hyundai A-League leaders Gold Coast United at Skilled Park.

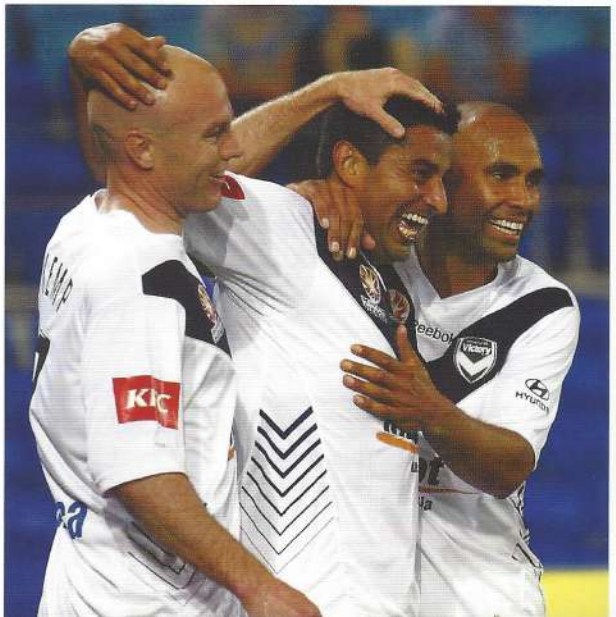
The first half in particular was a classic contest, with Gold Coast going ahead in the 16th minute through a Jason Culina penalty, only to see Hernandez level it six minutes later with a stunning strike from well outside the box.

The final five minutes of the half produced two goals, Archie Thompson giving Victory the lead, only for Joel Porter to level it up again for the home side minutes later.

But the telling moment of the match came with just six minutes remaining. Thompson's speed doing enough to get the better of the Gold Coast defence, whose desperate lunges clipped the striker.

To add insult to injury, encroachment allowed Muscat a second penalty attempt after he struck the initial effort over the bar, which he duly put away.

Thompson was inches away from adding a fourth goal deep into injury time, but it mattered little as Melbourne secured a second win on the trot.



SATURDAY OCTOBER 3, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 19,587

Melbourne Victory 2
Fabiano 3', Leijer 72'

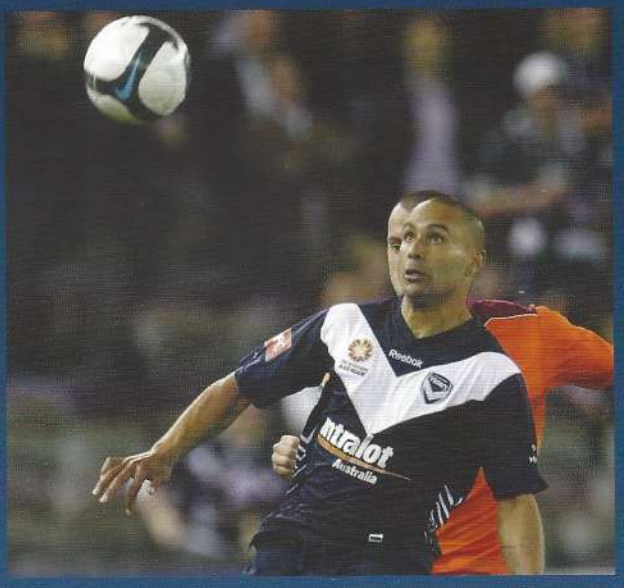
Brisbane Roar 1
Reinaldo 11'

Melbourne Victory moved to the top of the Hyundai A-League ladder thanks to a 2-1 win over Brisbane Roar at Etihad Stadium.

Former Roar player Robbie Kruse came into the starting line-up at the expense of veteran Grant Brebner as the only change to the side that defeated Gold Coast 3-2 the previous weekend.

Victory defender Adrian Leijer scored the winner in the 72nd minute after Roar striker Reinaldo had cancelled out Ney Fabiano's early strike in front of almost 20-thousand people.

Despite struggling with free kicks throughout the match, Melbourne playmaker Carlos Hernandez delivered the perfect cross to the far post, presenting Leijer with the scoring opportunity. The former Fulham defender rose highest to meet the ball and after his initial header was blocked, he reacted quickest to blast the loose ball into the roof of the net.



Melbourne fully deserved its win and was unlucky not to score more after dominating for large periods of the game and creating the best chances.

Aside from Reinaldo's goal, Victory's defence was rarely troubled and Roddy Vargas ensured Melbourne's lead remained intact with another assured performance at the back.

Victory brought on Tom Pondeljak for Ney Fabiano in the 67th minute and shortly after Thompson won a free kick in a dangerous area, but Hernandez again failed to hit the target.

The Costa Rican redeemed himself shortly after – delivering the ball for Leijer's winner - and from there Victory never looked back.

FRIDAY OCTOBER 9, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 30,668

Melbourne Victory	0
Sydney FC	3

Brosque 14', Bridge 15'/19'

Melbourne Victory fell victim to a first-half blitz from arch-rival Sydney FC, as fans turned out in droves at Docklands to witness the top of the table clash.

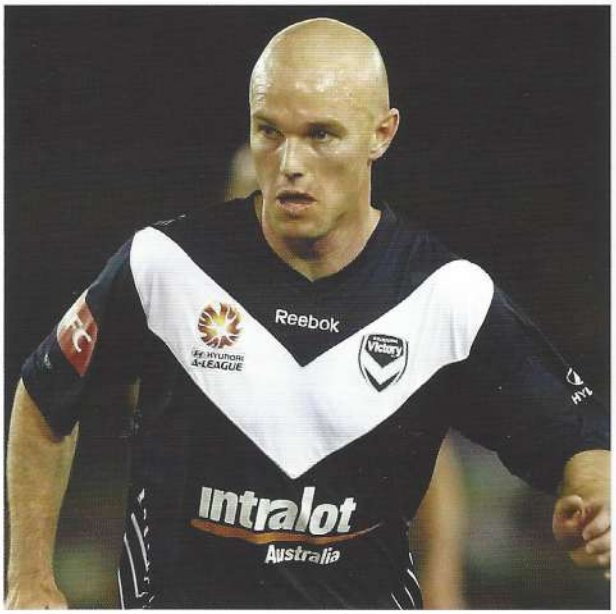
A crowd of 30,668 - watched on shocked as the visitors registered a 3-0 win - with all the goals coming in an amazing five-minute burst early in the first half.

Sydney scored from its first real attack in the 14th minute thanks to a great Simon Colosimo cross from the left – gifting Alex Brosque his first goal of the season.

The Sydney celebrations had barely died down when Mark Bridge exchanged passes with Terry McFlynn and then was given time to turn and shoot between legs.

Sydney incredibly went 3-0 up just four minutes later when Bridge scored his second.

This time the impressive Shannon Cole was the provider with a fine run down the right before unleashing another great cross, which Bridge volleyed home.



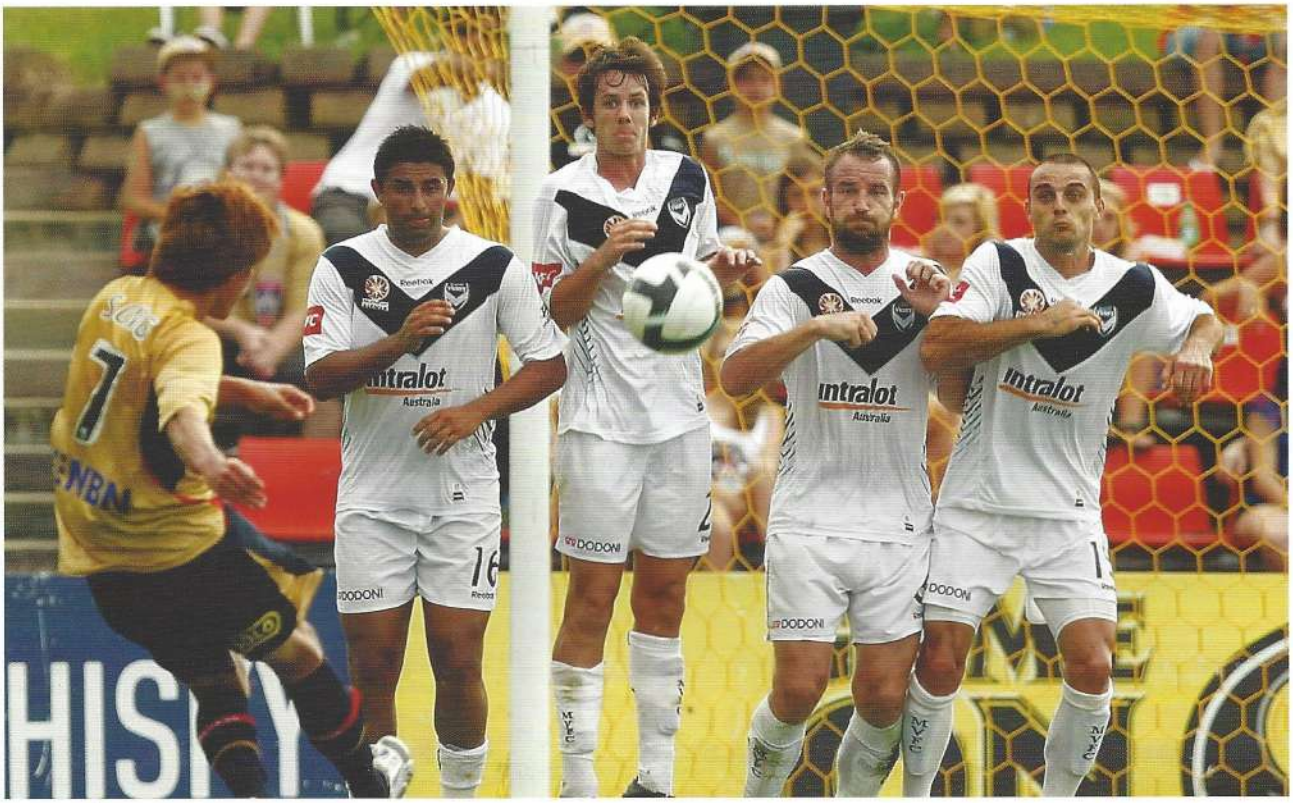
Melbourne struggled to break down a Sydney defence that had conceded just seven goals in nine games coming into the match.

Sydney coasted to just its third win in 13 encounters against Melbourne. Victory on the other hand, suffered its heaviest-ever home defeat.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 18, ENERGY AUSTRALIA STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 6,029

Newcastle Jets 1
Haliti 22'

Melbourne Victory 3
Thompson 61', Pondeljak 78', Hernandez 84'



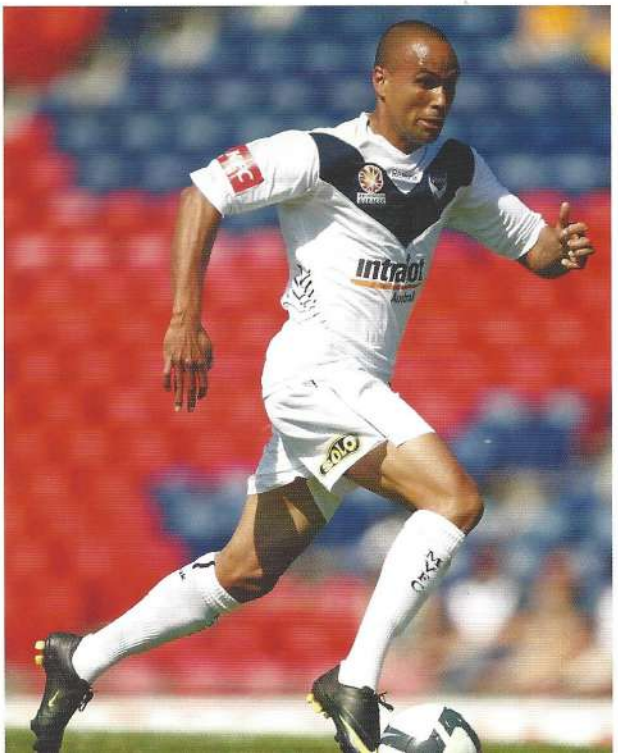
Melbourne Victory won its first match at EnergyAustralia Stadium since 2006, after fighting back from a goal down, in an entertaining 3-1 triumph over Newcastle Jets.

A fine effort from Labinot Haliti gave the hosts an early lead; however Melbourne rallied to produce a strong second-half display to leave the Hunter with all three points.

Archie Thompson restored parity for the visitors just after the hour with a delicate chip over the keeper, with Tom Pondeljak and Carlos Hernandez scoring the goals that secured the win in the 78th and 84th minutes respectively.

Pondeljak's effort was largely set up by the instrumental Costa Rican international, as the midfielder launched a powerful drive which Ben Kennedy could only manage to palm onto the crossbar. The ball fell kindly for wily winger Pondeljak, who had the simplest of tasks to finish into an unguarded net.

After making two assists, Hernandez made sure he'd leave Newcastle with one of his own, firing a low drive under Kennedy from an acute angle.



SATURDAY OCTOBER 24, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 21,182

Melbourne Victory 3
Dugandzic 18'/56', Leijer 89'

Adelaide United 1
Hughes 64'

A dazzling young talent and a battle-hardened veteran - announced themselves as instant fan favourites for Melbourne Victory in the club's 3-1 victory over Adelaide United at Etihad Stadium.

The youngster, Mate Dugandzic, scored two of Melbourne's goals - one in each half - to extend Victory's magnificent winning run over the Reds to eight matches.

The oldie, veteran Thai international striker Sutee Suksomkit, combined beautifully up forward with Archie Thompson throughout the night.

Adelaide kept Victory honest with a reply in the 64th minute.

Lloyd Owusu headed a corner from the right across the box where Adam Hughes was able to turn his marker and slot the ball inside the right post past a flat-footed Glen Moss.

The setback didn't stop Victory from attacking and they were rewarded with Adrian Leijer's unstoppable late goal, his second for the season, on the stroke of full-time with a powerful header from a Carlos Hernandez corner to make it five wins from the past six outings for Melbourne.

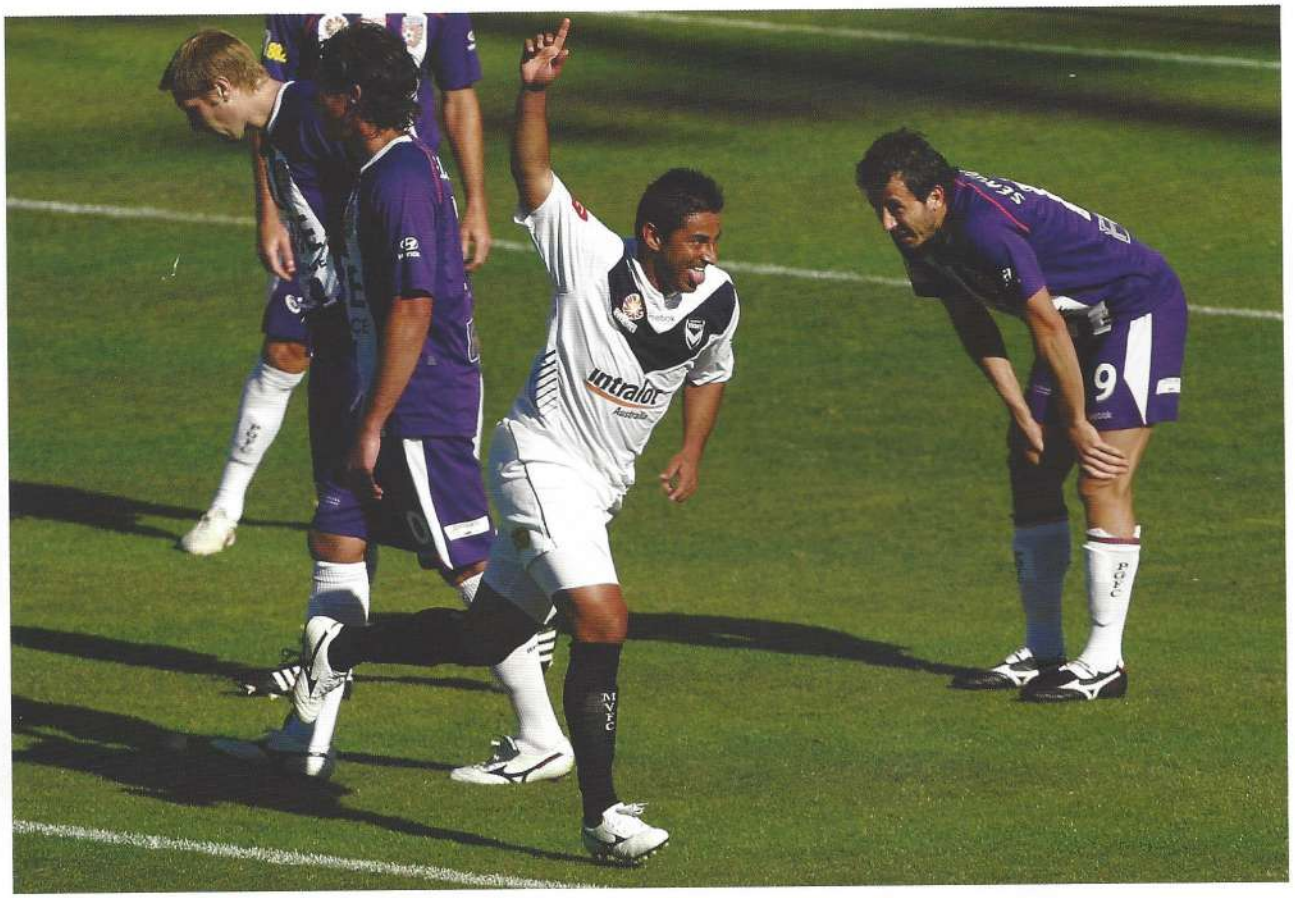
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1, MEMBERS EQUITY STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 10,035

Perth Glory Sterjovski 19'	1
Melbourne Victory C.Coyne 6' og, Hernandez 67'	2

Melbourne Victory smashed its Western Australian hoodoo thanks to another star performance from midfielder Carlos Hernandez.

Perth equalised on 19 minutes thanks to a piece of sheer brilliance from former Socceroo Mile Sterjovski.

The winner came after Victory youngster Nathan

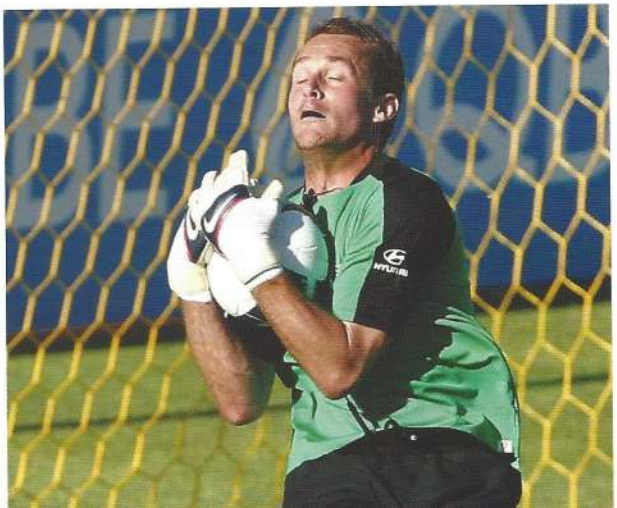


Hernandez was involved in both goals, as the reigning Hyundai A-League Champions scored their first home and away win at Members' Equity Stadium for three and a half years.

With Roddy Vargas returning to the centre of defence in place of the injured Surat Sukha, Melbourne started brightly and took the lead on six minutes.

The in-form Hernandez was surprisingly given plenty of space by the Perth defence, which stood off the Costa Rican star as he surged into the area, his shot taking a wicked deflection leaving Perth keeper Tando Velaphi helplessly stranded.

However Melbourne's lead did not last long as Elasi produced a superb cross which Hernandez poked home into an empty net.

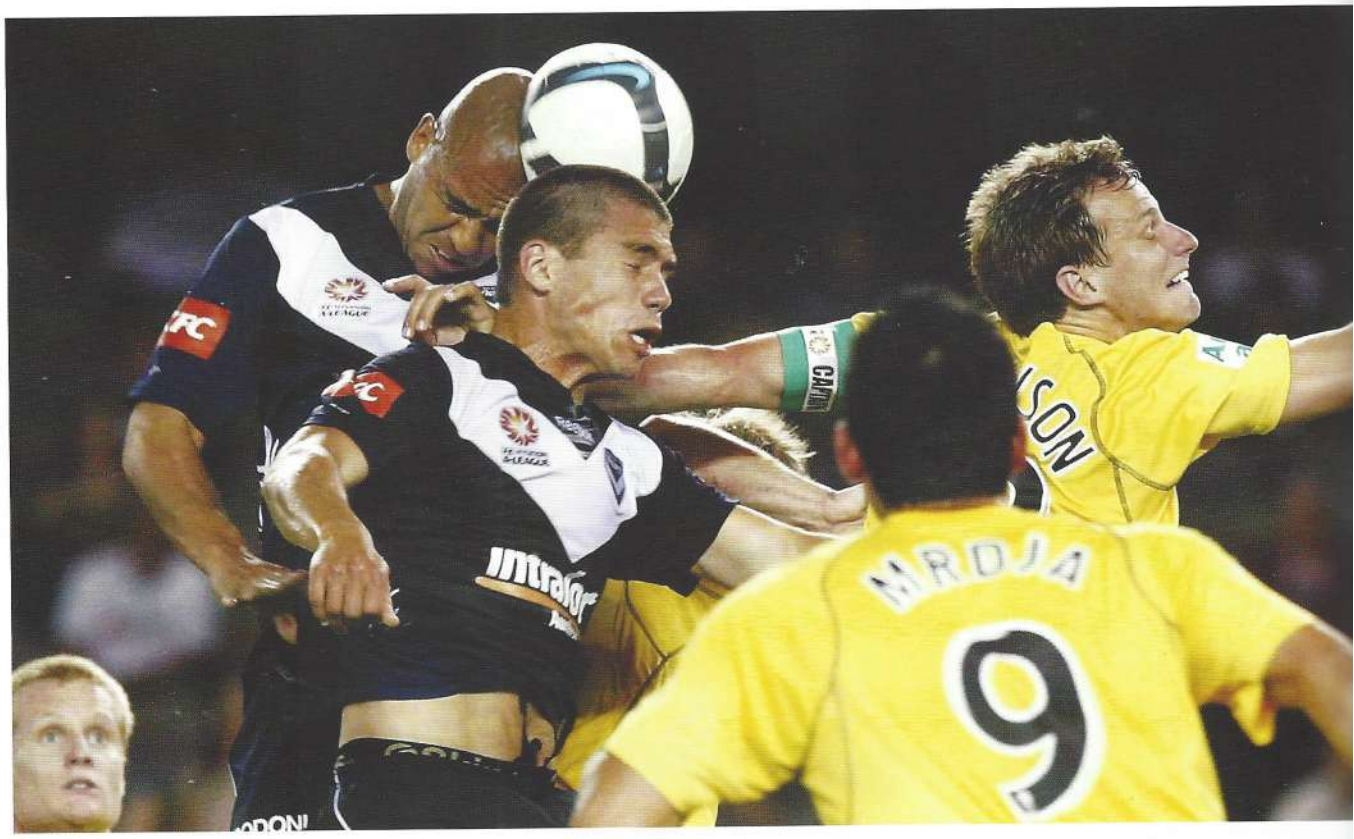


SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 18,531

Melbourne Victory 0
Central Coast 4

Kwasnik 15', Simon 75', Heffernan 80', Mrdja 84'

Melbourne Victory was embarrassed and suffered its worst defeat at Etihad Stadium with Central Coast Mariners registering an emphatic 4-0 win.



The visitors grabbed the advantage through Adam Kwasnik after just 15 minutes and then bagged three more goals late in the second half through Matt Simon, Dean Heffernan and Nik Mrdja to put the result beyond doubt.

Melbourne dominated the opening 10 minutes, with Carlos Hernandez firing over from a free kick and Archie Thompson, Sutee Suksomkit and Hernandez failing to capitalise on chances.

Having not had any direct shots on goal beforehand, the Mariners grabbed a surprise lead on the quarter hour through Kwasnik.

And they very nearly doubled their advantage straight after the resumption when Glen Moss just got a hand to a superb volley from Matthew Lewis.

With 15 minutes left, Simon rose at the far post to meet a well directed corner putting the visitors up 2-0.

The Mariners then found an unmarked Heffernan in the box and he fired under Moss for a third.

The icing on the cake came with minutes remaining when Andrew Clark was on hand to cut the ball back for fellow substitute Mrdja to slot home.

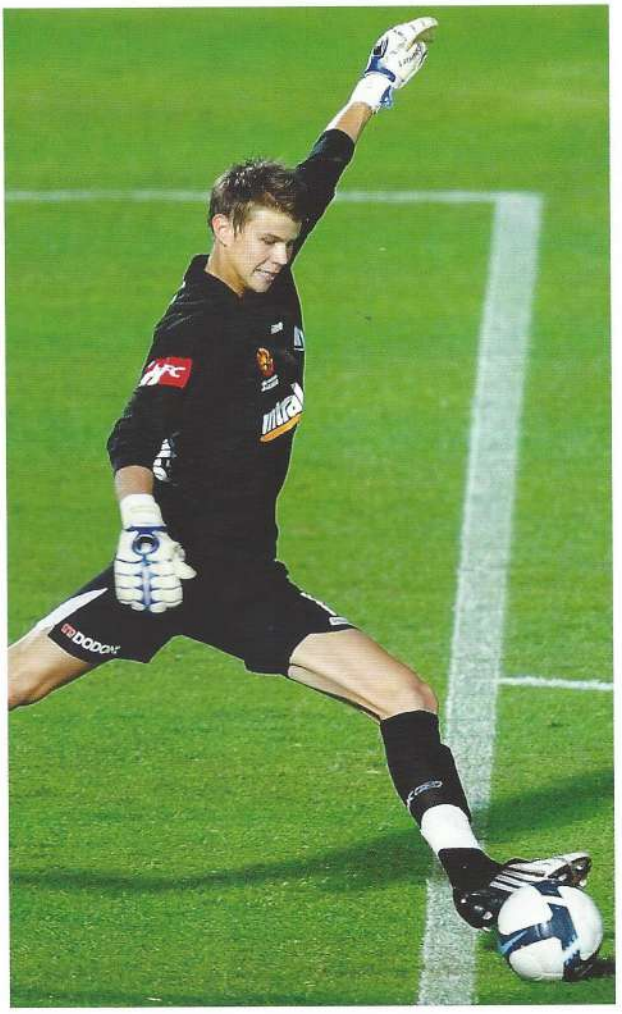
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 21, SUNCORP STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 9,904

Brisbane Roar 0

Melbourne Victory 1

Thompson 8'

Melbourne Victory bounced back superbly from its disappointing loss to Central Coast, going to the top of the ladder with a 1-0 win over Brisbane Roar.



Archie Thompson's sixth goal of the season in the eighth minute sealed all three points in front of 9,904 fans at Suncorp Stadium, their sixth win from seven starts on the road.

Melbourne made several changes to the team that went down to the Mariners, with goalkeeper Mitch Langerak, Nick Ward, Evan Berger and Robbie Kruse all starting.

Victory didn't have to wait long to open the scoring though, with Andrew Packer conceding a free kick for a foul on former team-mate Robbie Kruse and then compounding it when Muscat took the kick quickly and caught the defence napping.

With Packer not alert to the danger as the ball bounced into the area, Thompson's diving header found its way into the net to give the visitors the lead.

Brisbane found the back of the net from a corner with 17 minutes left, Josh McCloughan heading home, but referee Ben Williams didn't allow it to stand, ensuring Melbourne left with all 3-points.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 28, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 20,537

Melbourne Victory 4
Kruse 28', Ward 45', Thompson 54'/68'

Gold Coast United 0

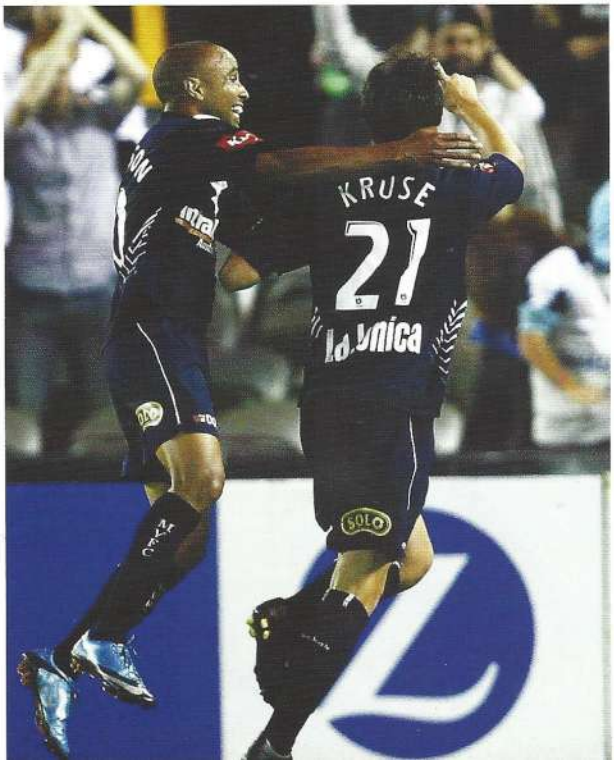
Robbie Kruse's spectacular first goal in a Melbourne Victory shirt, helped the reigning Hyundai A-League champion record it's most emphatic win of the season.

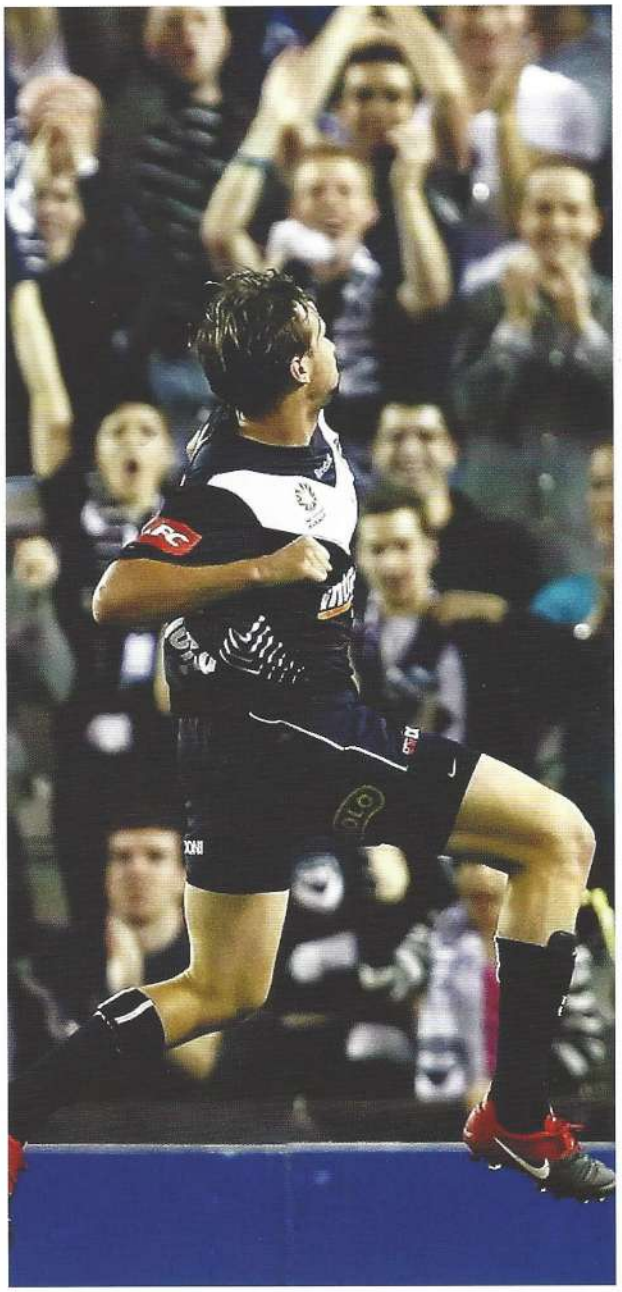
Victory's first home clash with the A-League's new glamour club, Gold Coast, was a one-sided affair as first-half goals from Kruse and Nick Ward set up the 4-0 hammering at Docklands, in rectangular configuration for the first time for Melbourne Victory.

Melbourne's rise to the top of the ladder in recent weeks had been built on its fantastic away record - the champions went into this clash having won seven of their past nine games.

Carlos Hernandez went close on three occasions for Melbourne, but it was Kruse who opened the scoring in the 28th minute when his 25-yard screamer nestled in the top right-hand corner.

It was the former Brisbane forward's first goal in six appearances for Melbourne and it wasn't long before Nick Ward came up with another of similar quality just before half-time.





Ward was perfectly set up by Archie Thompson and his 25-yard thunderbolt went in off the left post to have Victory cruising at the break.

Then in the second half Ward turned provider when he set up Thompson for Victory's third in the 54th minute with a perfect through ball, before Kruse then set up Thompson's second in the 68th minute, Archie finishing the move with a lovely curling shot into the top right-hand corner.

FRIDAY DECEMBER 4, WESTPAC STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 8,200

Wellington Phoenix 1
Brown 57'

Melbourne Victory 1
Vargas 86'

A rare Roddy Vargas goal rescued a point for 10-man Melbourne Victory in Wellington, but it could have easily been all three points for the reigning champions following a fantastic late fight-back.

Victory appeared headed for only their third loss in 13 matches when, after Nick Ward was sent off for a second bookable offence in the 39th minute, Wellington took the lead through Tim Brown in the 57th.

Despite being a man down, Melbourne dominated the final twenty minutes and scored a richly deserved equaliser through Vargas four minutes from time.

The centre-half superbly met a corner from Leigh Broxham and powered his header across Wellington keeper Mark Pasten into the far corner.

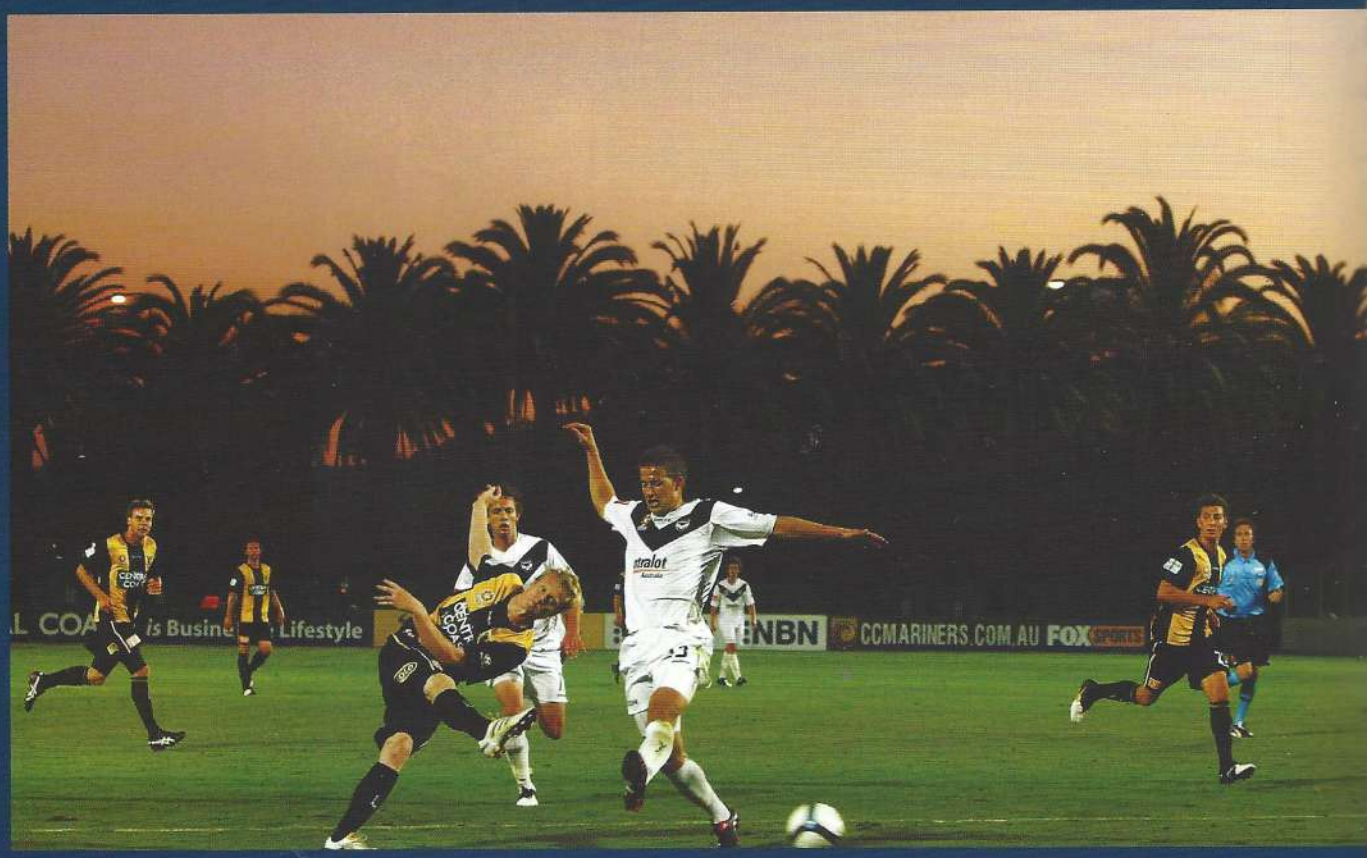
It was only the 31-year-old's fourth goal in 83 matches for Melbourne but could not have come at a better time.

Despite being outplayed and with Phoenix suddenly on the back foot, Melbourne swarmed all over the home side in search of a winner with Archie Thompson coming close on two occasions, but it wasn't to be, however the result extended Victory's lead at the top of the table.

SATURDAY DECEMBER 12, BLUETONGUE STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 7,571

Central Coast 0
Melbourne Victory 3

Hernandez 57', Kemp 71', Boogaard 77' og



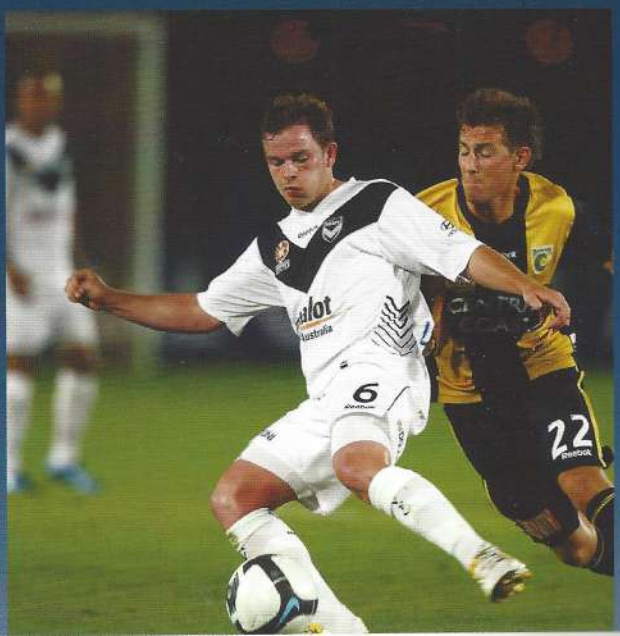
A superb second-half performance gave Melbourne Victory a 3-0 win against Central Coast Mariners at Bluetongue Stadium.

Carlos Hernandez had gone five games without scoring but after copping a nasty knock in the first half, he shrugged off the pain to finish some great teamwork on 57 minutes.

He then started the attacking manoeuvre for the second 14 minutes later, which Matthew Kemp was on the end of for just the second goal of his 91-game Hyundai A-League career and first for Victory.

The Mariners' worst loss of the season - and first at home - was completed when Nigel Boogaard deflected the ball into his own net on 77 minutes.

The win maintained Melbourne's three-point buffer over Sydney on top of the table and continued a remarkable run of away form which saw Victory win eight and draw one of ten matches on the road. It also went some way to avenging the two losses, 2-0 and 4-0, the club had suffered at the hands of the Mariners at Etihad Stadium earlier in the season.

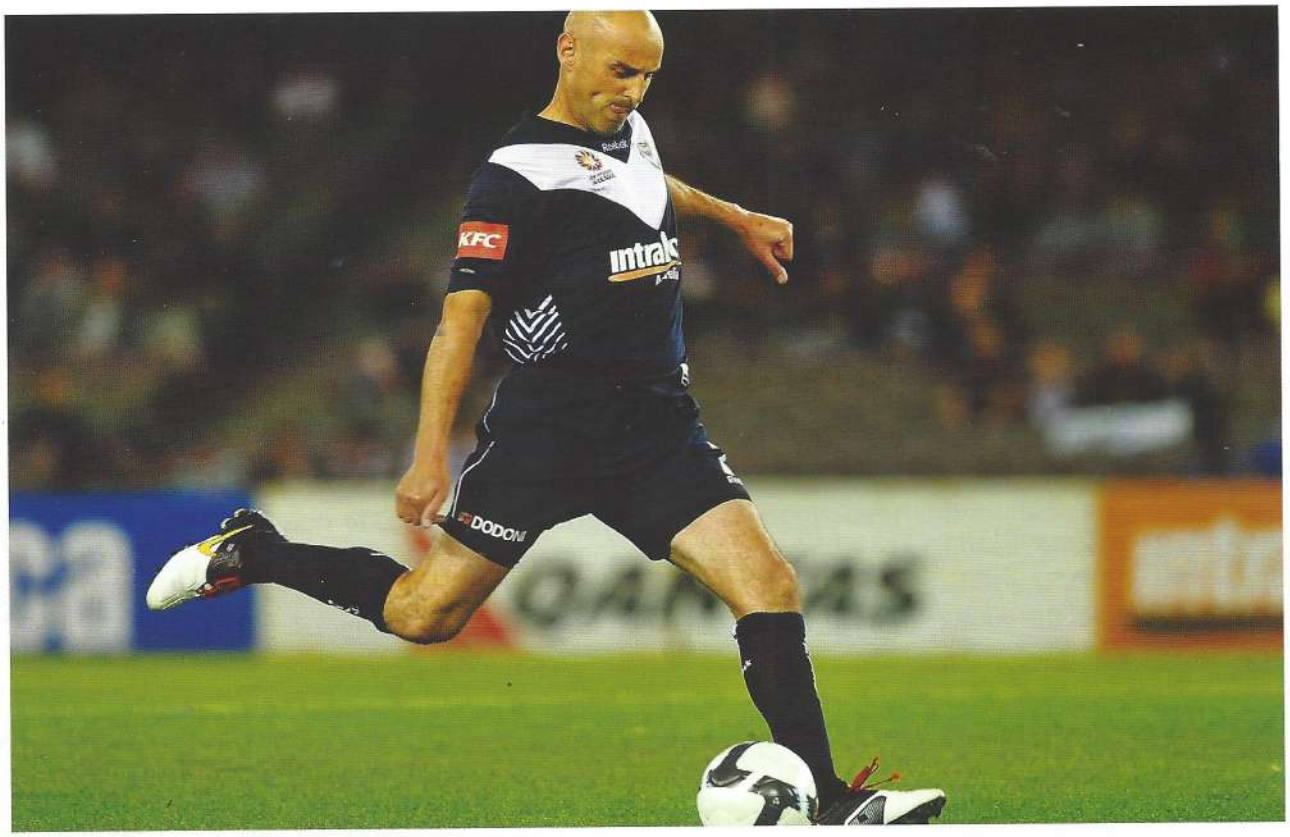


SATURDAY DECEMBER 19, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 27,344

Melbourne Victory 0
Sydney FC 0

Despite a dominant performance, Melbourne Victory was unable to break down a stubborn Sydney FC defense in a 0-0 draw at Etihad Stadium.

The home side dominated play but was unable to get their chances on target. Thompson would hit the side netting twice and head wide, while Carlos Hernandez failed to trouble Clint Bolton from two excellent positions.

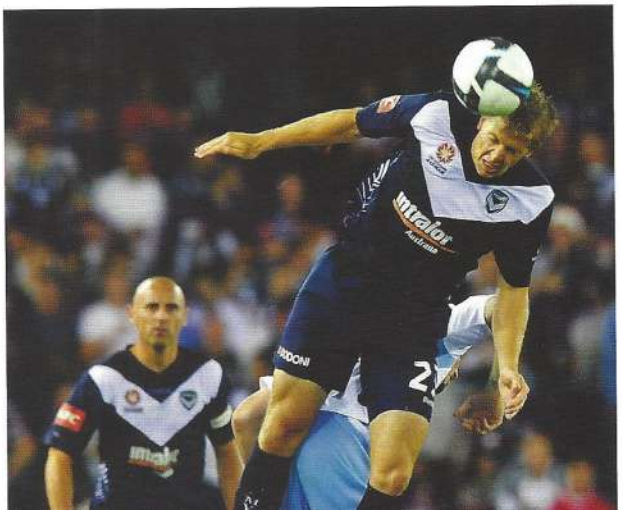


Melbourne had most of the possession and most of the chances - 21 to 6 - but a combination of wasteful shooting and a tight rear-guard action from the Sky Blues enabled the visitors to take a share of the points.

Kevin Muscat's ambitions of marking his 500th club match with a win were thwarted and he'd have to be content with the fact his team were still top of the table.

Melbourne made by far the brighter start to the match and had its best chance for the first half inside the first two minutes. Robbie Kruse stripped Alex Brosque of the ball and delivered it to Archie Thompson who lashed a shot into the bar. The ball fell for Leigh Broxham, who headed it over.

Melbourne keeper Mitch Langerak was in fine form and denied Alex Brosque on 21 minutes with a reflex block which was quickly cleared.



SUNDAY DECEMBER 27, DAIRY FARMERS STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 7,031

North Queensland Fury 1
Daal 30'

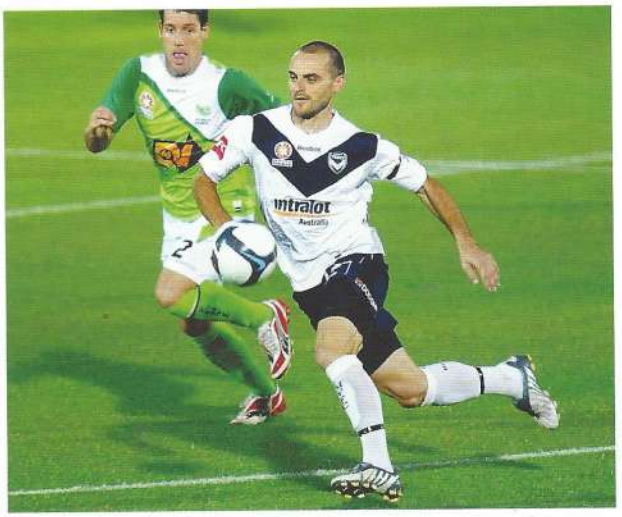
Melbourne Victory 0

Melbourne Victory's imperious away record in season 2009/10 was spoilt in far-north Queensland thanks to a classy first-half strike from Dyron Daal at Dairy Farmers Stadium.

That effort by the North Queensland striker was only the second time Victory's goal had been breached in 450 minutes of football, ruining the almost flawless record of the competitions sturdiest defence.

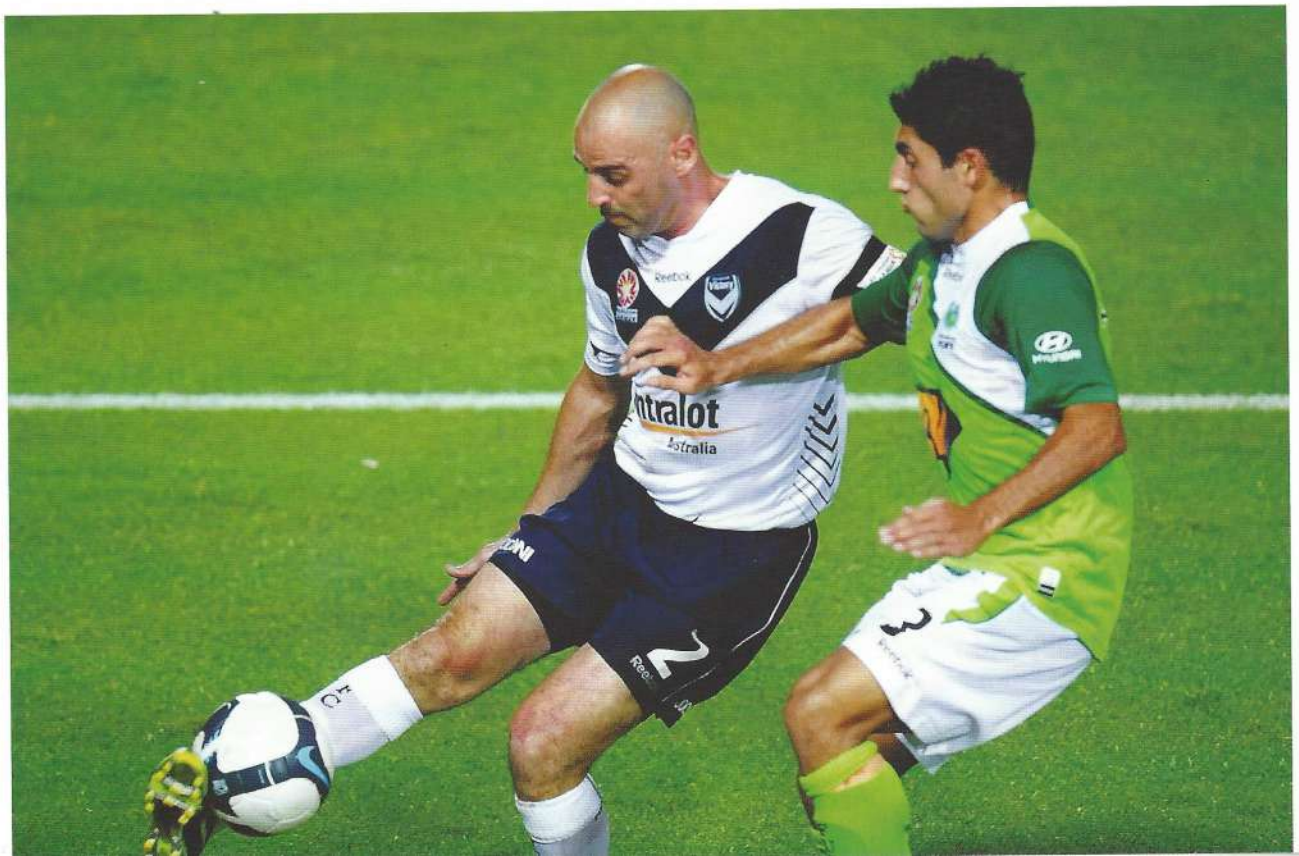
Mitch Langerak looked cool under pressure when some smart link-up play between Robbie Fowler and Jeremy Brockie allowed the latter to blast powerfully toward goal, but the young Victory 'keeper was up to the task.

It was then the visitors' turn to put the Fury on the back foot when skipper Kevin Muscat delivered a brilliant through ball for the run of Robbie Kruse who was causing headaches for a stationary Fury defence. Only a timely charge from 'keeper Pasfield, denied the young striker.



It took a sublime piece of skill from the two Fury strikers to finally get one past a desperate Victory defence in the 30th minute.

Marquee signing Fowler found himself in space down the right side before delivering a ball of unnerving skill and clinical precision to Daal, who chested down the pass and struck it low and hard to beat not only Langerak but Victory too.



SUNDAY JANUARY 10, ENERGY AUSTRALIA STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 6,979

Newcastle Jets 3
M.Thompson 25', Bridges 44', Haliti 55'

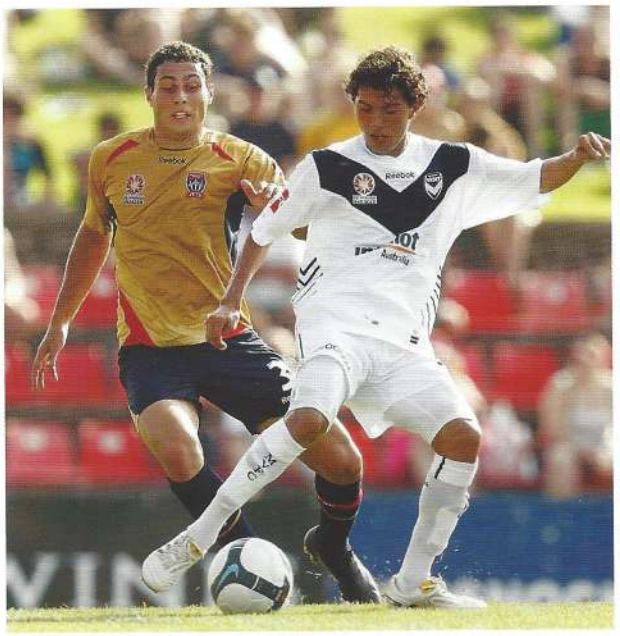
Melbourne Victory 2
Muscat 44'p, Hernandez 90'

A 10-man Newcastle Jets outfit kept its finals ambitions alive with a 3-2 victory over a travel-weary Melbourne Victory in a fiery and drama-filled clash at EnergyAustralia Stadium.

In a game littered with six yellows and one red card, a quality first half strike from Jets skipper Matt Thompson was enough to grant the hosts the lead in the 20th minute before the drama unfolded.

Victory captain Kevin Muscat equalised from the penalty spot as Jets defender Ben Kantarovski earned his second yellow card for the game after blatantly pulling back Robbie Kruse inside the area.

Entering time-on in the first half, Jets import Michael Bridges proved too classy with his finish as he registered the Jets second, before a top drawer volley was rammed home by Labinot Haliti in the 55th minute all but securing the three points for the Jets.



Carlos Hernandez gave some consolation to an otherwise disappointing effort from the visitors with a late goal and while Victory pressed forward with numerous thrusts thereafter, they were continually turned away by the Jets defence.

SATURDAY JANUARY 16, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 20,448

Melbourne Victory 6

Thompson 4', Kruse 12'/26'/39', Muscat 81'p, Hernandez 82'

Perth Glory 2

Vargas 19'og, Sterjovski 52'

Melbourne Victory bounced back from successive defeats with an emphatic 6-2 win over Perth Glory at Etihad Stadium - Robbie Kruse netting a first-half hat-trick as the hosts ran riot.

Archie Thompson may have opened the scoring with his first goal since late November with Kevin Muscat and Carlos Hernandez also scoring, but it was Kruse who stole the show with goals in the 12th, 26th and 39th minutes to keep intact Victory's unbeaten record against Glory in Melbourne.

The game was also the second-highest scoring affair in the five seasons of the Hyundai A-League, behind Sydney's 5-4 win over Central Coast Mariners in December 2007.

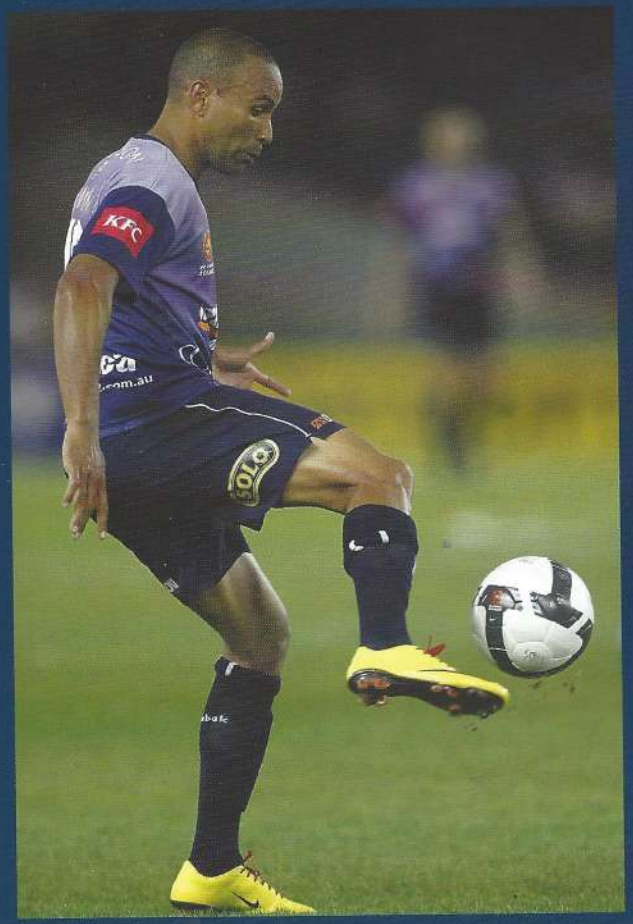
Melbourne opened the scoring in just the fourth minute when Hernandez's defence-splitting ball put Thompson into space and he made no mistake with only Tando Velaphi to beat.

Perth did provide some nervous moments during the second half, Mile Sterjovski scoring in the 52nd minute to make it 4-2 but the introduction of Marvin Angulo in the final quarter of an hour paid dividends when he twice provided dangerous balls that led to Muscat's penalty and Hernandez's goal.

SATURDAY JANAURY 23, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 20,361

Melbourne Victory 2
Pondeljak 1', Muscat 90+4'p

Adelaide United 0



Tom Pondeljak returned to haunt Adelaide United once again after scoring one of the fastest goals in Hyundai A-League history during a 2-0 win at Etihad Stadium.

Pondeljak, who scored the only goal in Melbourne's 1-0 grand final win over Adelaide last season, scored after just 22 seconds, in a game which highlighted the contrasting paths these two clubs have taken since Victory clinched their second championship last season.

While Melbourne's second successive win at home - which was sealed by an injury-time penalty from skipper Kevin Muscat – saw the club return to the top of the ladder, the loss all but ended Adelaide's slim finals hopes and left the Reds anchored to the bottom of the ladder.

As usual the architect was Costa Rican playmaker Carlos Hernandez whose superb pass put Archie Thompson into space down the left hand side. Thompson then produced a perfect cross which Pondeljak met at the far post.

And while Adelaide goalkeeper Eugene Galekovic saved Pondeljak's first effort he was helpless as the ball landed back in the path of the Victory veteran to smash home the rebound.

The goal was one of the fastest in A-League history but not the fastest of all time with that record still belonging to Adelaide's Louis Brain who scored after just ten seconds against Melbourne in 2005/06.

Melbourne sealed victory when Thompson was bought down in the box in injury-time with Muscat keeping his cool from the spot to score his third goal in three games.

The win moved Melbourne above Gold Coast on goal difference at the top of the table.

TUESDAY JANUARY 26, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 18,819

Melbourne Victory 4

Brown 16'og, Thompson 50', Hernandez 66', Kemp 87'

Wellington Phoenix 0

Melbourne Victory took full advantage of its game in hand to celebrate Australia Day with a thumping 4-0 win over Wellington Phoenix and surge back to the top of the A-League ladder.

In a slick performance that surely sent a warning to close rivals Sydney FC and Gold Coast United, Melbourne took the lead through a Tim Brown own goal after just 16 minutes.

And in the second half Melbourne really found its flow. Archie Thompson celebrated his 100th A-League appearance with a fine finish in the 50th minute before an unmarked Hernandez made sure of the three points in the 66th.

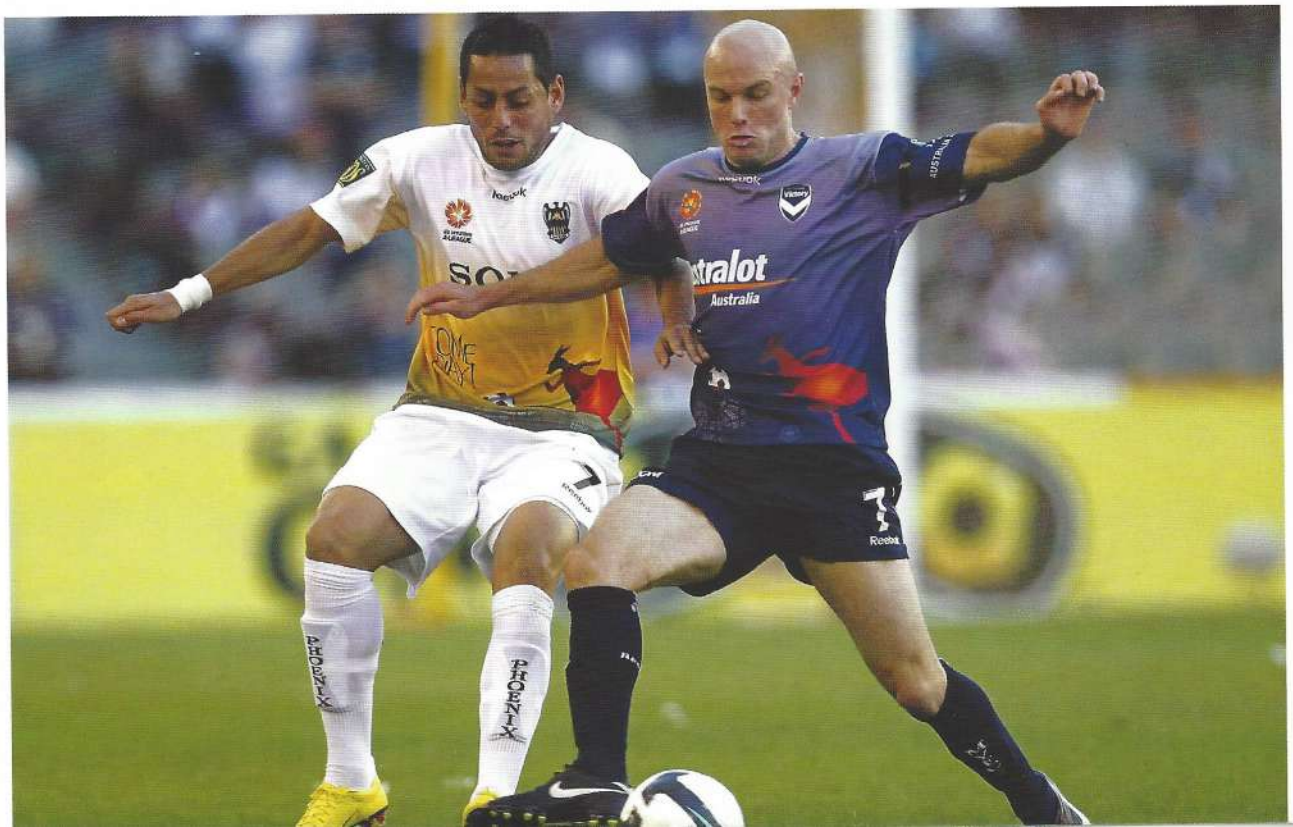
Matthew Kemp returned to the side as a substitute and to add insult to injury, tucked home Victory's fourth in the 87th minute after substitute Nick Ward's audacious back heel fell into his path.

Victory's forward quartet of Hernandez, Thompson, Marvin Angulo and Robbie Kruse proved a constant thorn in Wellington's side, particularly as the game wore on.

Angulo - proving to be another excellent acquisition by coach Ernie Merrick - was given his first start after two sparkling substitute appearances, and didn't fail to impress.

His range of passing constantly exposed Wellington's high defensive line in his first full game for the club while Leigh Broxman once again deputised for Evan Berger at left back.

Angulo had numerous chances to cap off his fine game with a goal but couldn't do so, as Victory ran out convincing 4-nil winners.



FRIDAY JANUARY 29, SKILLED PARK. ATTENDANCE: 7,249

Gold Coast United 1
Caravella 76'

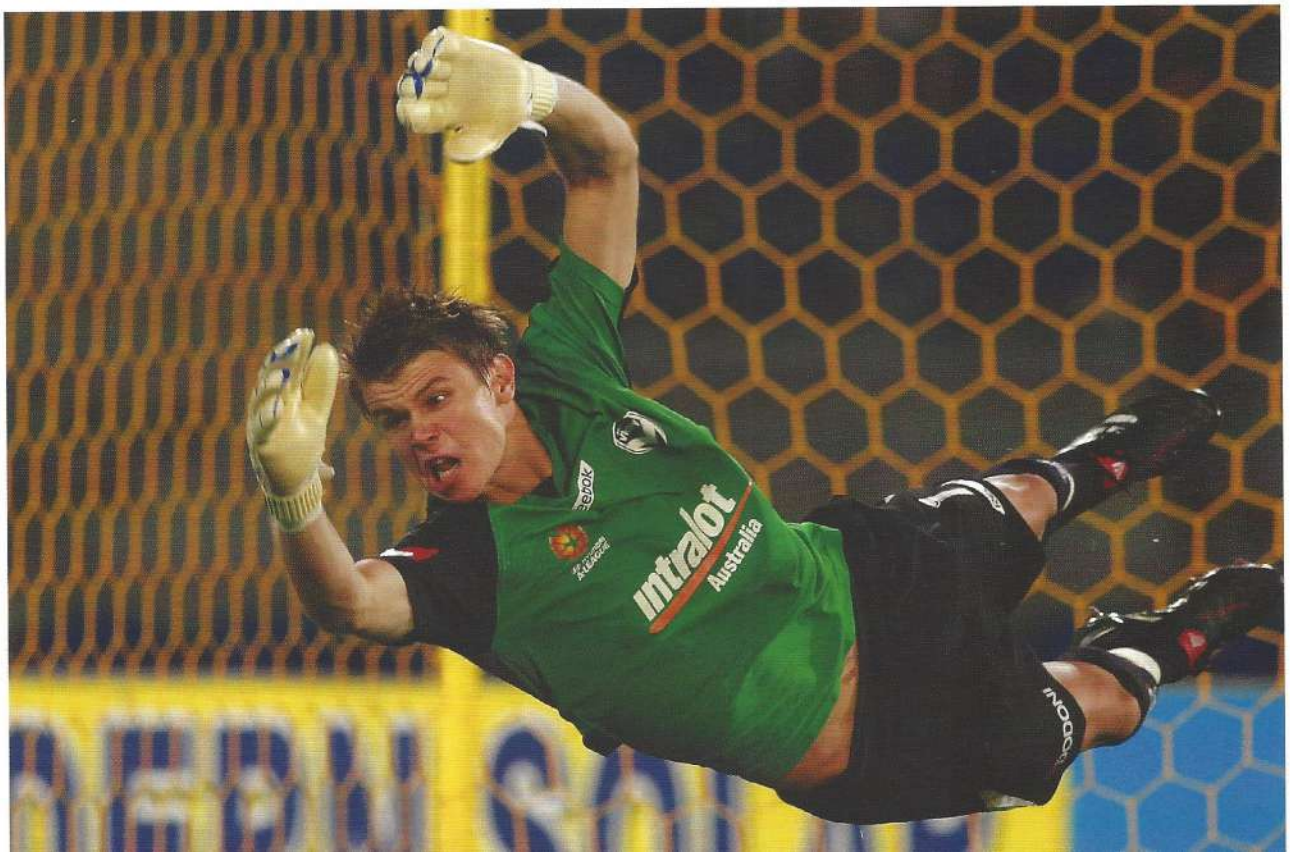
Melbourne Victory 0

Gold Coast United kept its top-two hopes alive and ended Melbourne's three-game winning streak in the process with a hard-fought 1-0 win over Victory at Skilled Park.

After a spiteful first half, it was the home side which refocused best after the break - Dino Djulbic and Jason Culina combining to set up Zenon Caravella for his first Hyundai A-League goal in the 76th minute.

Djulbic streamed along the right side, crossed into the box where Culina back-heeled it into Caravella's path. The 26-year-old unleashed a brilliant strike which sizzled into the top left-hand corner of the net giving the diving Victory goalkeeper Mitchell Langerak no chance.

Gold Coast continued to attack as the minutes ticked away but it was Carlos Hernandez who had a good chance to equalize in injury time. He took a free kick from just outside the box but his attempt wasn't one of his best and the ball scuttled along the pitch well wide of the target.



FRIDAY FEBRUARY 5, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 22,726

Melbourne Victory 2
Hernandez 35'/66'

North Queensland Fury 0

A sublime double from Carlos Hernandez sent Melbourne Victory three points clear at the top of the Hyundai A-League ladder after a well-deserved 2-nil win over North Queensland Fury at Etihad Stadium.

With Archie Thompson (foot) and skipper Kevin Muscat (suspension) both absent, Hernandez struck in the 35th and 66th minutes to steer Victory within sight of a third Hyundai A-League Premiers' Plate in four seasons with one round remaining.

The win came at a cost, however, with key defender Matthew Kemp suffering a knee injury in the opening exchanges – which ultimately ended his season.

The 29-year-old bravely fought on before he was assisted from the field by medical staff in just the 11th minute, with Evan Berger slotting into the back four in his place.

Despite the setback, Hernandez looked to have opened his side's account on 21 minutes when his curling free-kick beat Mark Pasfield but the Fury custodian was saved by the crossbar.

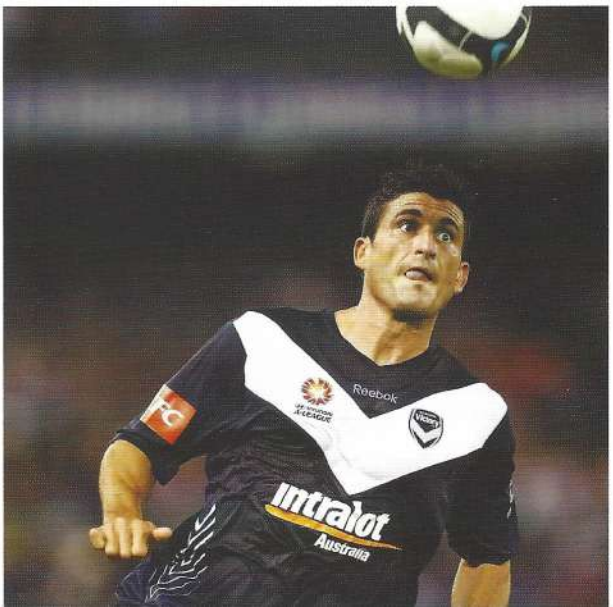
The visitor's first chance arrived on the half-hour in the form of a free kick to Robbie Fowler, but the former England international sent his effort onto the top netting.

It was the hosts though who struck first blood when Hernandez produced a moment of brilliance after a searching run from Kruse down the right flank.

Having received the ball from Angulo inside the penalty box, Hernandez shook off defender James Downey before squeezing a powerful strike past Pasfield at the near post.

And the Fury custodian was helpless to stop the star import's curling free-kick in the 66th minute also - giving the hosts a 2-nil lead.

Robbie Fowler should have pulled one back for North Queensland in the dying stages, but the former England international somehow failed to find an empty net.



SUNDAY FEBRUARY 14, SYDNEY FOOTBALL STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 25,407

Sydney FC 2

Kisel 34', Aloisi 49'

Melbourne Victory 0

Melbourne's hopes of securing back-to-back titles were dashed after spectacular goals to Karol Kisel and John Aloisi saw Sydney FC secure their first Hyundai A-League Premiership.

Played in front of a vocal crowd of 25,407 – the fifth largest ever for the Sky Blues – Sydney FC were spurred on by captain Steve Corica's decision to retire at season's end, putting in a stellar all round performance.

Despite leaving the field after 15 minutes with a hamstring injury, the skipper was unable to hide his satisfaction as he raised the Premiers Plate proudly in front of the Sydney faithful.

Needing a win to take out the premiership, Sydney signalled their intentions early. From the outset they displayed a hard running, attacking style of play.

In the middle Karol Kisel was dominant with hard running and precision passing the feature. On 34 minutes he showed great vision and innovation to put Sydney on the board in spectacular fashion.

From 30 metres out and with Mitch Langerak off his line, he used the outside of his boot to lob the ball over the keeper's outstretched hand and into the back of the net, much to the delight of the large crowd.

A superb strike from Aloisi five minutes into the second half had the fans on their feet in what turned out to be the sealer for the Sky Blues.

Taking the ball just inside his own half, he showed excellent control and poise to maintain possession just outside the area.

His strike was just as impressive curving away from Langerak and thundering into the top left hand corner to give Sydney a commanding 2-0 win.

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 18, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 18,453

Melbourne Victory 2
Mrdja 16', Hernandez 40'

Sydney FC 1
Aloisi 42'

The return of skipper Kevin Muscat galvanised the reigning Hyundai A-League Champions as Melbourne Victory drew first blood in the two-legged Major Semi-Final against Sydney FC at Etihad Stadium.

Muscat was at the heart of Melbourne's two first-half goals and in fact inadvertently was involved in all three goals scored in the opening half including, unfortunately, Sydney's reply.

The evergreen Melbourne skipper picked out Victory's new recruit Nik Mrdja with a superb long ball in the 16th minute.

The 31-year-old found space on his left foot, and his finish was deadly as he picked the perfect time to score his first goal for his new club.

After waiting so long to see their team score against Sydney for the first time this season, jubilant Victory fans did not have to wait long for another.

Nick Ward supplied Hernandez who produced a superb, ice-cool finish which nestled in the bottom right hand corner of the Sydney net.

But no sooner did Melbourne gain the two-goal advantage than Sydney pulled one back through John Aloisi.

Carlos Hernandez almost scored what would have been the goal of the season with a freakish volley from the right-hand edge of the penalty box.

It was as close as either side would come to scoring in the second half as Melbourne did enough to ensure it would take a one-goal advantage to Sydney for the second leg.

SUNDAY MARCH 7, SYDNEY FOOTBALL STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 23,818

Sydney FC Kisel 35'p, Bridge 54'	2
Melbourne Victory Kruse 15', Thompson 113'	2

*MELBOURNE VICTORY WON 4-3 ON AGGREGATE.

Melbourne Victory wrote another epic chapter in its bitter rivalry with Sydney FC after coming from behind to secure a Grand Final berth, thanks to a pulsating 2-2 draw in extra time at the Sydney Football Stadium.

A wonder strike from surprise Victory starter Robbie Kruse handed the visitors the lead as early as the 15th minute before a dubious penalty call on Victory's Adrian Leijer enabled Karol Kisel to equalise late in the first half.

Mark Bridge scored again for the hosts in the 54th minute, leveling the tie up 3-3 on aggregate and sending it into extra time.

Victory super sub Archie Thompson nabbed a crafty equaliser (3-4 on aggregate) in the second period of extra time to hand Melbourne its third home Grand Final in four seasons.

With only seven minutes remaining until a dreaded penalty shoot out, Thompson's predatory instincts combined with Kevin.Muscat's craftiness to foil a hastily-constructed Sydney FC

wall. With Sydney FC defenders looking over their left shoulders for Muscat's presumed delivery, Thompson snuck around the back to the right to meet Muscat's side-footed pass, which enabled the Victory striker to slide it under keeper Clint Bolton's panicked parry and seal a Grand Final berth.

SATURDAY MARCH 20, ETIHAD STADIUM. ATTENDANCE: 44,560

Melbourne Victory 1
Leijer 81'

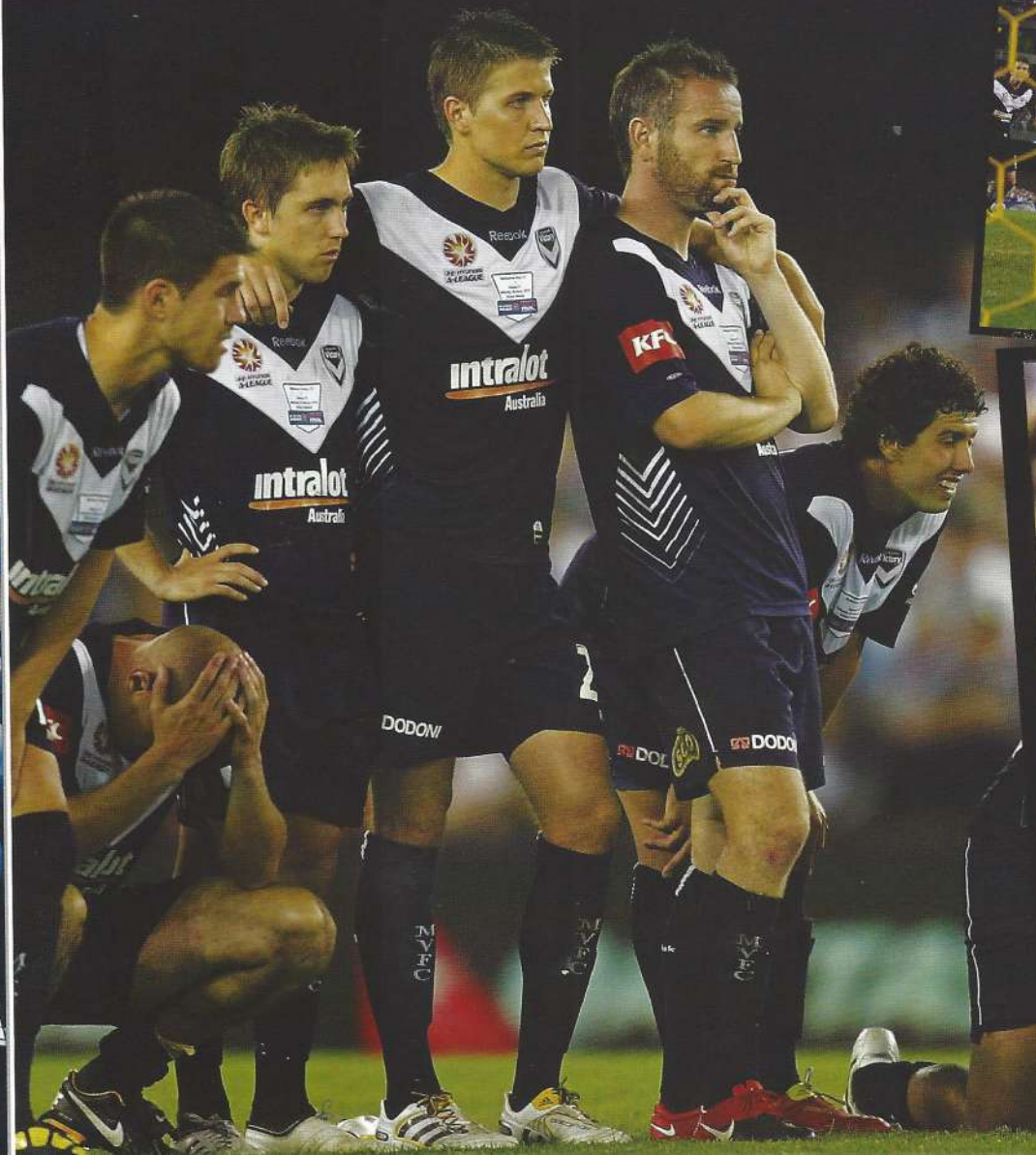
Sydney FC 1
Bridge 63'

*SYDNEY FC WON 4-2 ON PENALTIES

Melbourne Victory's bid to become the first Hyundai A-League club to win back-to-back championships ended in heartbreak after it went down to Sydney FC in the first ever penalty shoot-out to decide a Grand Final.

Victory, which lost superstar striker Archie Thompson to a serious knee injury after only 16 minutes, fought magnificently to even take the game to extra time after they looked headed for defeat when Mark Bridge scored in the 63rd minute.

It was the second time in three seasons that Bridge had scored in a Grand Final after doing so for Newcastle against Central Coast in its 1-0 win in 2008.



Melbourne appeared deflated and should have fallen two behind when Chris Payne missed a sitter of a header in the 67th minute.

However, showing the courage which has been its trademark for five years, Victory looked to have rescued the game when Leijer headed home superbly after rising above two Sydney defenders in the 81st minute following Muscat's quickly-taken free kick.

Melbourne Victory youngster Aziz Behich squandered a glorious chance to win it for his side in the final minutes, but was unable to make any meaningful contact, as Clint Bolton collected the loose ball.

Despite a late onslaught, Sydney held on until the end of 90 minutes and as both teams ran out of legs in extra time, it was inevitable the match would be decided on penalties.

It was the first time, in fact, that two teams had scored in a Hyundai A-League Grand Final but after an uneventful period of extra time, the scores remained locked at 1-1.

It was left to the dreaded penalty shoot-out to decide the 2009/10 Champion as well as Melbourne's bid to become the first Hyundai A-League club to win three Championships.

But after Sydney veteran Simon Colosimo, who was lucky to stay on the pitch when he could so easily have received a second yellow card in the second half, scored the opening penalty - disaster struck for Melbourne.

Victory skipper Kevin Muscat - the most reliable penalty taker in the Hyundai A-League having never missed one - then missed his team's first spot-kick when his shot struck the left post.

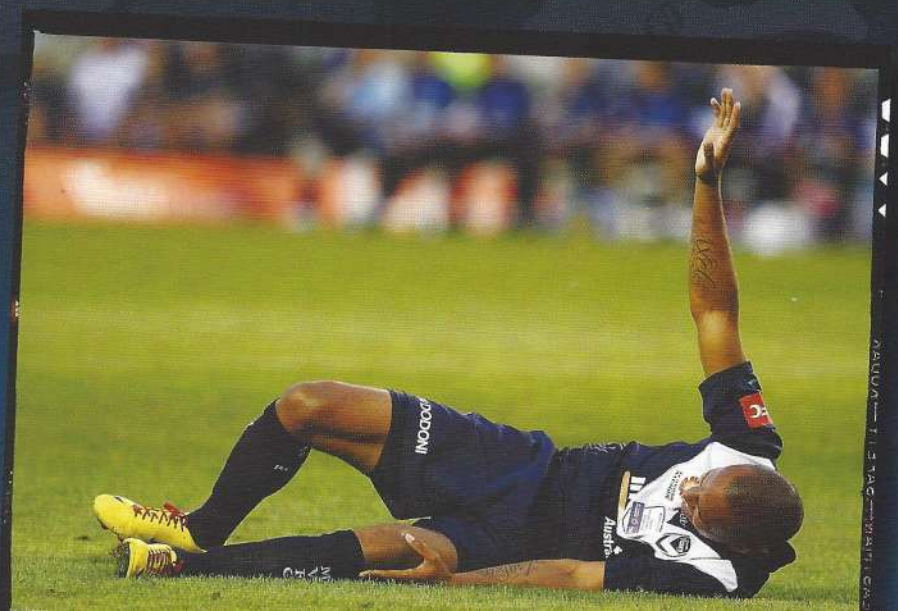
Melbourne gave itself a chance of rescuing what would have been one of its greatest wins ever when keeper Mitch Langerak pulled off a great save from Shannon Cole, before Grant Brebner converted Melbourne's second penalty to get back on terms.

But after Hayden Foxe then scored Sydney's second penalty, Melbourne missed again when Sydney keeper Clint Bolton saved from Costa Rican import Marvin Angulo.

Sydney's Karol Kisel then scored to make it 3-1 on penalties leaving Melbourne midfielder Leigh Broxham needing to score to keep Melbourne's hopes alive.

He did but Sydney then converted its final penalty through Korean Sung-Hwan Byun to win the shoot-out 4-2 and claim its second championship - now equal with Melbourne after five seasons of the Hyundai A-League.

Melbourne Victory was brave in defeat and could only rue the injury curse which had plagued the club all season.



AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Looking to progress past the group stages of the Asian Champions League for the first time, Melbourne Victory's campaign got off to an uninspiring start in China, going down 1-nil to Beijing Guoan. Despite a stirring performance, a Joel Griffiths goal in the 51st minute was enough to send Victory home without a point.

A fortnight later a tired Melbourne outfit suffered its second successive ACL loss – this time to Koreans, Seongnam Ilhwa at Docklands. The 2-nil defeat coming just 48 hours after Victory booked its place in the Hyundai A-League 2009/10 Grand Final.

Following the devastation of the Grand Final loss, another long trip to Asia followed and a crowded late-season schedule was starting to take its toll. Melbourne was thrashed 4-nil by Japanese powerhouse Kawasaki Frontale - leaving them without a point after 3 matches.

If Victory was to qualify for the knockout phase, they'd need to take something from the return clash with Kawasaki at Etihad Stadium. An inspired display from 'keeper Mitch Langerak kept the hosts in the contest, while skipper Kevin Muscat secured 3-points from the penalty spot.

With its chances of progression still hanging by a thread, Melbourne needed to win its home fixture against Beijing Guoan, but could only manage a nil-all draw – ending its hopes of qualifying for the last 16 in the process.

One last road-trip ensued and with nothing to play for, Victory fielded a young side in its final clash with Seongnam Ilhwa – and almost pulled off a huge upset. Having twice drawn level with the Koreans through Mate Dugandzic and Tom Pondeljak, a Cho Jae-chul goal seven minutes from time ended a testing ACL campaign in disappointing fashion.

RESULTS

Beijing Guoan 1 – 0 Melbourne Victory
(Beijing, China)

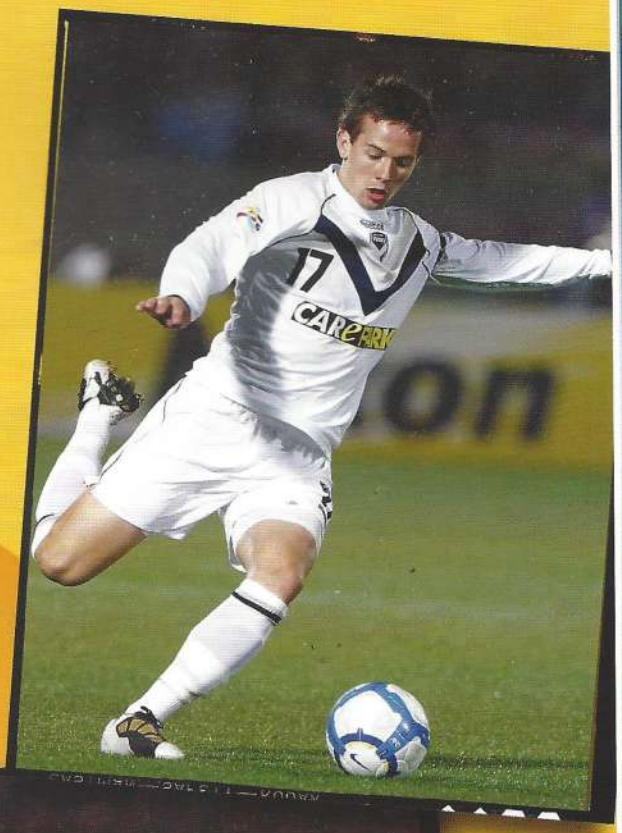
Melbourne Victory 0 – 2 Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma
(Melbourne)

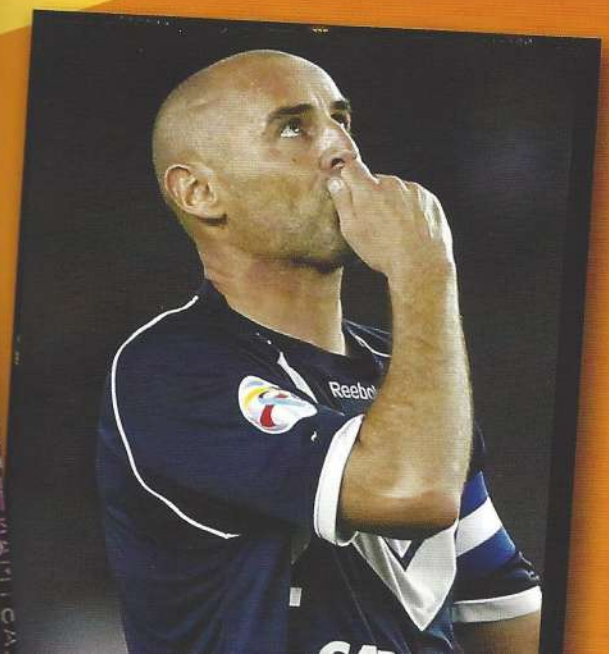
Frontale Kawasaki 4 – 0 Melbourne Victory
(Kawasaki, Japan)

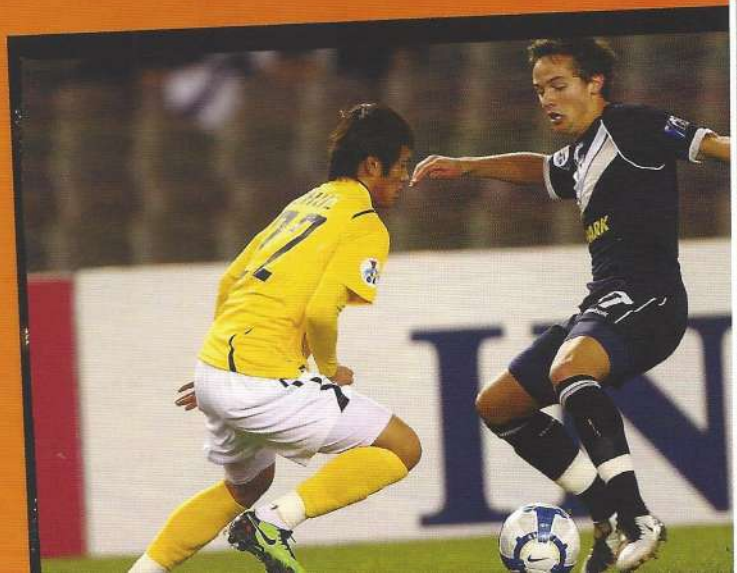
Melbourne Victory 1 – 0 Frontale Kawasaki
(Melbourne)
Goal: Muscat pen

Melbourne Victory 0 – 0 Beijing Guoan
(Melbourne)

Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma 3 – 2 Melbourne Victory
(Seongnam, Korea)
Goals: Mate Dugandzic, Tom Pondeljak







Marquee player and star forward, Archie Thompson claimed his second Victory Medal in front of more than 500 guests at Peninsula, Central Pier, Docklands.

Thompson, 31, who has been sidelined until early next year following a knee reconstruction, was first named Melbourne Victory's best player in 2007/08 and joins Kevin Muscat and Danny Allsopp as the third player to win the award more than once.

Johnny Warren medalist, Carlos Hernandez, was rewarded with the Players' Player of the Year and SEN TAC Player of the Year, as well as the club's Golden Boot for his 13 goals in 2009/10.

Robbie Kruse was named The Age Young Player of the Year following his first campaign with the club, while Matthew Kemp, who is also overcoming a recent knee reconstruction, won Clubman of the Year.

Aziz Behich and Julianne Sitch won the Victory Youth and Victory Women Medals respectively, with Melissa Barbieri taking out Melbourne Victory Women's Players' Player of the Year and Katrina Gorry the Clear Solar Young Player of the Year.

Melbourne Victory Coach Ernie Merrick paid tribute to Thompson, who netted 11 goals in 26 matches in 2009/10 and overcame a broken foot to score the Major Semi Final winner in extra time against Sydney FC earlier this month.

"Archie's had his best season yet for Melbourne Victory," Merrick said.

"When he arrived in season one he was a terrific player, but he has continued to develop and is now a quality goal scorer, provider, creator and ball winner.

"He has improved enormously and the consistency of his performances made him a worthy winner of the Victory Medal.

"Personally, his injury is an enormous setback, but I'm sure he'll return bigger and stronger than ever."

Costa Rican star Carlos Hernandez took out the Hyundai A-League's highest individual accolade, the Johnny Warren Medal, at the Hyundai A-League 2009/10 Awards Night at The Ivy in Sydney.

Voted on by his playing peers throughout the Hyundai A-League 2009/10 season, Hernandez blitzed the field polling 673 votes, 242 ahead of Gold Coast United's Shane Smeltz (431) and Wellington Phoenix import Paul Ifill (311).

Hernandez was quick to pay tribute to the clubs fans "I'd like to thank our supporters for taking me under their wing and encouraging me to play my natural game".

"It was a big step for me and my family to move to Melbourne, but I love this city and I love this club. They have made me feel very welcome and I still think I have some improvement to come"

"This award would not have been possible without my teammates. They help me play well and are a great group of people" he added.

Melbourne Victory Coach Ernie Merrick was named the Hyundai A-League Coach of the Year, as voted by his fellow Hyundai A-League coaches.

It was the second time Merrick had collected the Coach of the Year award after winning the 2006/07 trophy also.

"These guys are extremely coachable and this award is as much about them as it is me" Merrick said.

"It's obviously very humbling to be crowned Coach of the Year for a second time, especially considering the depth of coaching talent in Australia these days".

Archie Thompson rounded off a successful night for Melbourne Victory by claiming the 'Solo Goal of the Year' for his Round 16 cracker against Gold Coast United at Etihad Stadium.

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47. Nexia ASR Pty Ltd
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54. Realestateview.com.au
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56. Sigiad Security Controls Pty Ltd
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PLAYER SPONSORS

PLAYER	COMPANY	SPONSORS
Mitchell Langerak	Private	Chris and Sue Kuhanez
Kevin Muscat	National Foods Limited	Steven Bozinov
Leigh Broxham	Sigiad Security Controls	Simona Santoli
Matthew Kemp	Private	Chris and Sue Kuhanez
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Mathew Theodore	Dennis Madden	Dennis Madden
Evan Berger	Shaver Shop, Chapel St	Cristian Troncoso
Glen Moss	Aipex	Trevor Townsend
Adrian Leijer	Premier Fruits Group	Anthony Di Pietro
Nick Ward	Asta Solutions	Bill Angelidis

Melbourne Victory's commitment to making the world game accessible to players of all backgrounds and abilities continued throughout the Hyundai A-League 2009/10 season.

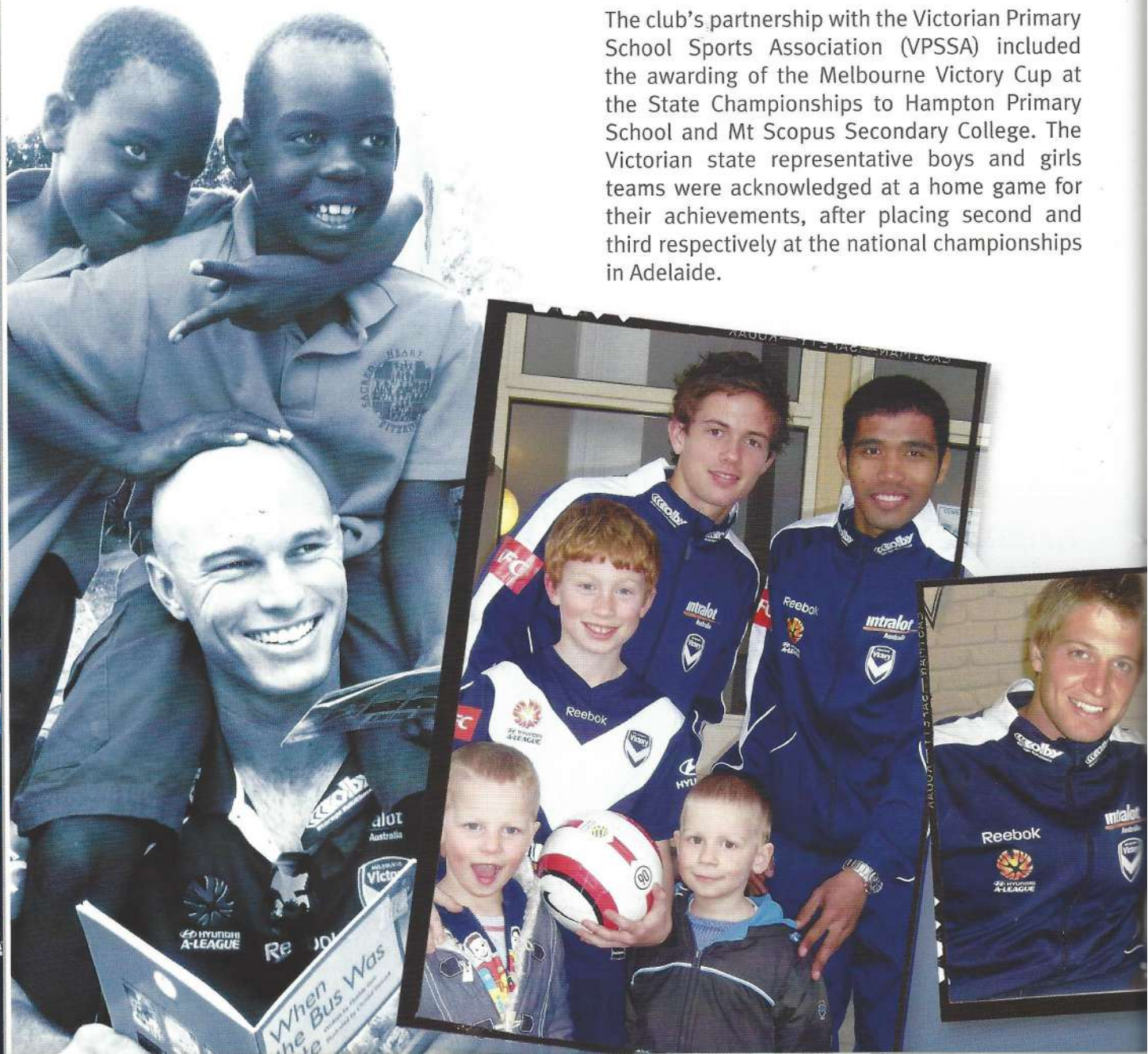
Melbourne Victory's Metro Roadshows called in on twenty lucky junior clubs throughout August and September, providing over 5,000 juniors with the chance to meet their Melbourne Victory heroes.

The Regional Roadshow proudly presented by KFC, visited Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Shepparton and Traralgon in September, with more than 2,000 attendees. The program also served as a celebration of the Optus Small Sided Football season in each area.

Melbourne Victory strongly supported Football Federation Victoria's 'Victorian Champions League' (VCL), with players visiting several training sessions during the summer season. The VCL culminated in the Gold Medal Night held in the Victory Room at Etihad Stadium prior to Melbourne Victory's final home game of the Hyundai A-League 2009/10 season.

Now in its second year, Melbourne Victory's School 5-a-side competition attracted over 6,300 Grade 3 and 4 students as well as 600 teachers from 260 Victorian Primary Schools. Travelling over 6,800km, including 36 gala days, 12 of which were held in regional Victoria, the success of the program has led to it being adopted nationally by Football Federation Australia in 2010.

The club's partnership with the Victorian Primary School Sports Association (VPSSA) included the awarding of the Melbourne Victory Cup at the State Championships to Hampton Primary School and Mt Scopus Secondary College. The Victorian state representative boys and girls teams were acknowledged at a home game for their achievements, after placing second and third respectively at the national championships in Adelaide.



Melbourne Victory defender Matthew Kemp continued in his role as ambassador for The Smith Family, assisting in launching the Annual Toy and Book Christmas Appeal, volunteering at the Christmas Hamper packing and assisting at the Atherton Garden's Homework Club. 'Learning for Life' students participated in the Australia Day clash against Wellington Phoenix, acting as mascots and playing small sided football at half time.

A partnership was also forged with Zaidee's Rainbow Foundation, with midfielder Grant Brebner signing on as an organ donor in support of the cause. Brebner and team mates Leigh Broxham, Adrian Leijer and Kevin Muscat wore Zaidee's Rainbow shoelaces during the season to raise awareness for organ and tissue donation.

Match day opportunities through the Care Park Ball Squad, Hyundai Centre-Circle Mat and the Optus Small Sided Football display, allowed 750 budding footballers the chance to get up close and personal to the action on game day.

Melbourne Victory's participation in the Asian Champions League provided opportunities for a further 180 juniors to act as the Official Ball Squad, Flag Bearers, Mascots, and Small Sided Games participants.

Principal partner, Intralot hosted a clinic with children from The Drum, Carlton Primary School and Drummond Street Services. Melbourne Victory Captain, Muscat and teammates Brebner, Broxham, Pondeljak and Ward, were on hand to teach the kids some football tricks and skills.

The Age Superclinic at Etihad Stadium saw 200 keen youngsters put through their paces by players including Leijer, Kruse and Vargas.

The LeasePlan 'Carn the Kids' program invited over 1,000 kids from disadvantaged backgrounds to attend a Melbourne Victory game, while the 'Carn the Kids' clinic with ambassador Vargas and young guns Kruse and Langerak proved a massive hit!

In conjunction with community partner TAC, Melbourne Victory and Central Coast Mariners played off for the Epworth ABI Cup in November, to raise funds for the Acquired Brain Injury support unit at Epworth Hospital.

Members and supporters were invited to attend Open Training Sessions during each school holiday break, held at various venues across Melbourne.

Melbourne Victory also supported other key community events including the Cultural Diversity Cup, Good Friday Appeal, Lord Mayors Student Welcome, Monash University O-Week, Starlight Children's Foundation/Starlight Express Room, Victoria Police Regional Schools Program, VICSRAPID and VIVA Victoria Festival.

ROUND 1

Adelaide United 3 - 3 **Melbourne Victory**
(Wooding 23', Allwright 51', Shin 72') (Behich 34', Demo 83, Pace 90+3')
Friday September 18, Hindmarsh Stadium.

ROUND 2

Gold Coast United 1 - 1 **Melbourne Victory**
(Harold 52') (Duganzic 17')
Sunday September 27, Southport Stadium.

ROUND 3

Melbourne Victory 1 - 1 **Brisbane Roar**
(Behich 25') (Bratten 74')
Sunday October 4, Veneto Club.

ROUND 4

Melbourne Victory 0 - 1 **Sydney FC**
(Kerem Bulut 87')
Saturday October 10, Veneto Club.

ROUND 5

Newcastle Jets 1 - 2 **Melbourne Victory**
(Naidovski 70') (Foschini 14', Behich 29'p)
Sunday October 18, EnergyAustralia Stadium.

ROUND 6

Melbourne Victory 2 - 0 **Adelaide United**
(Elasi 32', 61')
Sunday October 25, Veneto Club.

ROUND 7

Perth Glory 0 - 0 **Melbourne Victory**
Sunday November 1, ME Bank Stadium.

ROUND 8

Melbourne Victory 4 - 1 **Central Coast Mariners**
(Elasi 41', 80', 83', Behich 77') (Nikas 65'p)
Sunday November 8, Veneto Club.

ROUND 9

Perth Glory 0 - 3 **Melbourne Victory**
(Kruse 28', 33', Elasi 72')
Sunday November 15, Clipsal Stadium.

ROUND 10

Brisbane Roar 0 - 2 **Melbourne Victory**
(Elasi 20', Tedros Yabio 88')
Sunday November 22, Ballymore Stadium.

ROUND 11

Melbourne Victory 0 - 5 **Gold Coast**
(Barisic 25', Halloran 58', Harold 73'/77', Russell 90+2')
Sunday November 29, Veneto Club.

ROUND 12

Central Coast 2 - 1 **Melbourne Victory**
(Smith 26', Nikas 85'p) (Pilkington 51')
Saturday December 12, Bluetongue Stadium.

ROUND 13

Melbourne Victory 0 - 1 **Sydney FC**
(Bulut 12')
Sunday December 20, Epping Stadium.

ROUND 14

AIS Canberra 0 - 2 **Melbourne Victory**
(Theodore 30', Behich 32'p)
Sunday December 27, AIS Canberra.

ROUND 15

Melbourne Victory 0 - 2 **Newcastle Jets**
(Angel 53', Iacovelli 82')
Saturday January 2, Veneto Club.

ROUND 16

Newcastle Jets 0 - 0 **Melbourne Victory**
Friday January 8, Adamstown Oval.

ROUND 17

Melbourne Victory 1 - 1 **Perth Glory**
(Angulo 48') (Skorich 55')
Sunday January 17, Epping Stadium.

ROUND 18

Melbourne Victory 2 - 4 **Adelaide United**
(Milovanovic 69'og, Elasi 78'p) (Mitris 24', Milovanovic 48'p, Monterosso 53', Sitin 61')
Sunday January 24, Epping Stadium.

ROUND 19

Gold Coast 2 - 2 **Melbourne Victory**
(Harold 55', Barisic 63') (Demo 40', Behich 62')
Saturday January 30, Southport Stadium.

ROUND 20

Melbourne Victory 1 - 3 **AIS Canberra**
(Elasi 22') (Ibrahim 33', 60', Sainsbury 87')
Saturday February 6, Epping Stadium.

ROUND 21

Sydney FC 2 - 1 **Melbourne Victory**
(Ferreira 7'og, Chianese 47') (Tolli 41')
Saturday February 13, Seymour Shaw Park.

ROUND 22

Melbourne Victory 1 - 1 **Central Coast Mariners**
(Norton 91') (Nikas 90'p)
Saturday February 20, Epping Stadium.

ROUND 23

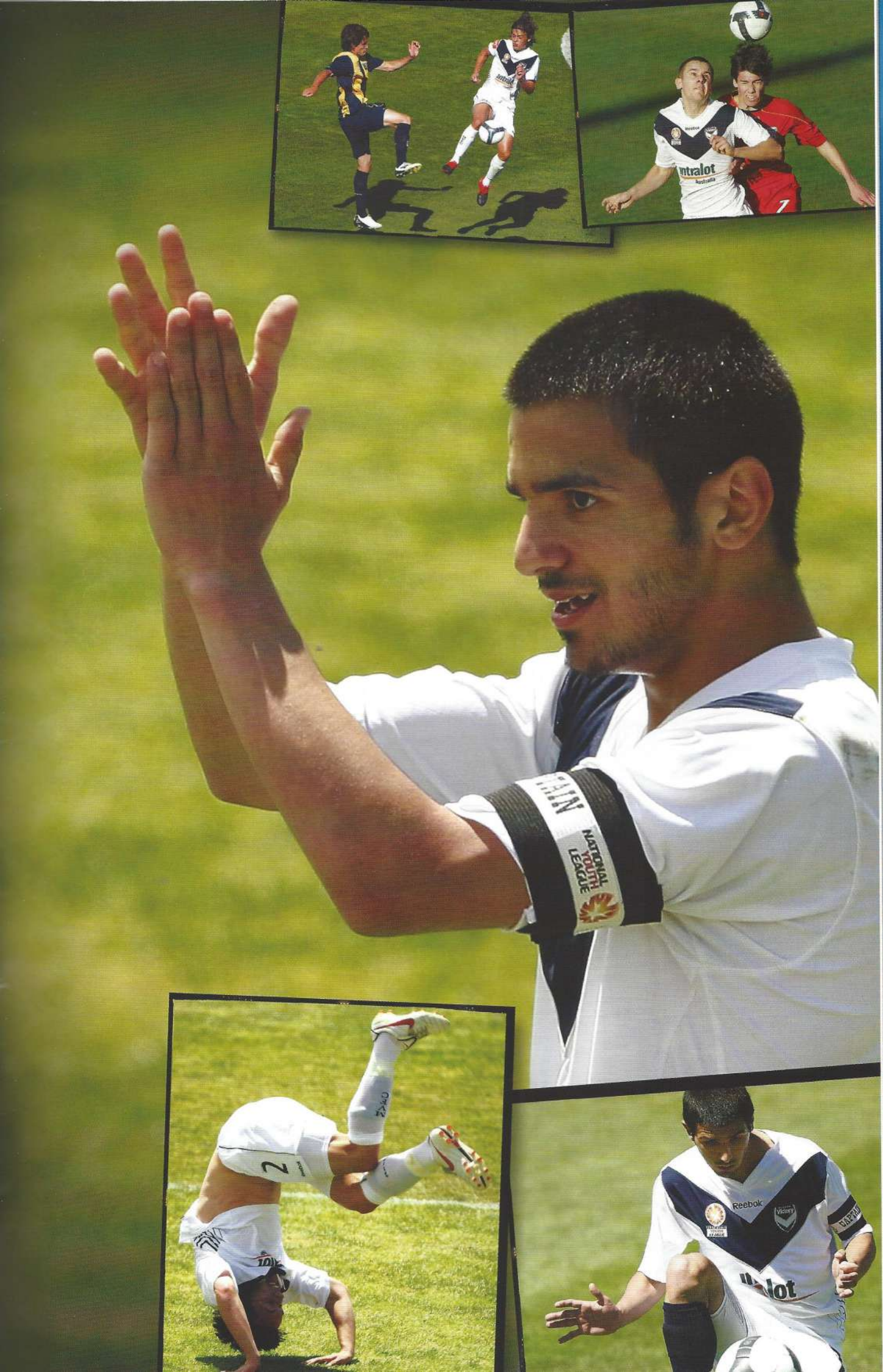
Melbourne Victory 6 - 1 **Brisbane Roar**
(Sweeney 39', Dugandzic 48', 88', Stirton 58', 75', Ferreira 86') (Stratten 34'p)
Saturday February 27, Epping Stadium.

ROUND 24

AIS Canberra 5 - 1 **Melbourne Victory**
(Ibrahim 17', Davison 43', Becket 68', Stanojevic 71', Edwards 90') (Elasi 42')
Sunday March 7, AIS Canberra.

	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Central Coast Mariners FC	24	12	8	4	48	34	14	44
2	Perth Glory FC	24	13	4	7	39	35	4	43
3	Adelaide United FC	24	10	10	4	50	37	13	40
4	Gold Coast United	24	10	9	5	54	37	17	39
5	Sydney FC	24	11	6	7	43	33	10	39
6	Melbourne Victory FC	24	7	8	9	36	37	-1	29
7	Newcastle Jets FC	24	8	3	13	36	48	-12	27
8	Brisbane Roar FC	24	5	5	14	38	58	-20	20
9	Australian Institute of Sport (AIS)	24	3	5	16	32	57	-25	14

P = played | W = wins | D = draws | L = losses | F = goals for | A = goals against | GD = Goal Difference | Pts = points



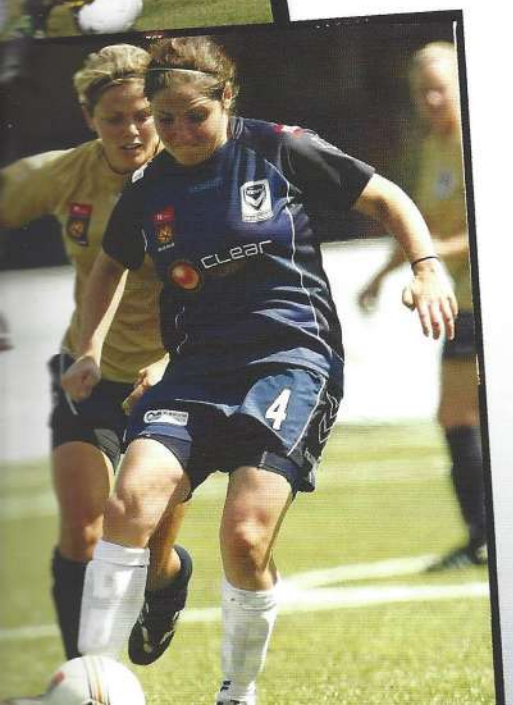
HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE

National Youth League 2009/10

In yet another tight Westfield W-League season, Melbourne Victory's girls once again came close to securing a finals berth, but were unable to overcome Perth in the final game to secure fourth spot. The team finished fifth on goal difference, and although disappointed to have not made finals, there was some consolation having taken points off the competitions top two teams.

Coach Matt Shepherd worked tirelessly once again in a bid for success in the new competition. Combining a mix of international talent, a handful of interstaters and a strong group of young up and coming Victorians, Matt and the girls were able to successfully juggle work, school and university with the rigours of training and playing.

From a representative perspective, it was fantastic to see so many Victory women earn spots in national teams and head away to national camps. Melbourne Victory Co-Captain Melissa Barbieri was made Captain of the Asian Cup winning Matildas and after two impressive seasons in the Westfield W-League, Laura Alleway made her international debut. While Victorian youngsters Steph Catley and Caitlin Friend were joined by Queensland import Katrina Gorry in earning selection in the Young Matildas squad.



Round 1

Melbourne Victory 2 - 0 **Perth Glory**
(Barilla 34', Thorlakson 71')

Saturday October 3, Etihad Stadium.

Round 2

Melbourne Victory 0 - 1 **Brisbane Roar**
(Ellen Beaumont 83')

Saturday October 10, Epping Stadium.

Round 3

Adelaide United 0 - 2 **Melbourne Victory**
(Katrina Gorry 73' Selin Kuralay 81')

Saturday October 17, Hindmarsh Stadium.

Round 4

Canberra United 2 - 0 **Melbourne Victory**
(O Tseng 27', 48')

Saturday October 24, McKellar Park.

Round 5

Melbourne Victory 2 - 1 **Newcastle Jets**
(Gorry 45', Niceski 90'+) (Cartwright 62')

Saturday October 31, Veneto Club.

Round 6

Melbourne Victory 1 - 1 **Sydney FC**
(Julianne Sitch 62') (Maika Ruyter-Hooley 90'+og)

Saturday November 7, Deakin Reserve.

Round 7

Brisbane Roar 1 - 1 **Melbourne Victory**
(Polkinghorne 49') (Mowbray 88')

Saturday November 14, Ballymore Stadium.

Round 8

Central Coast Mariners 2 - 0 **Melbourne Victory**
(Heyman 27', 52')

Saturday November 21, Leichhardt Oval.

Round 9

Melbourne Victory 1 - 0 **Canberra United**
(Thorlakson 89')

Saturday November 28, Olympic Park.

Round 10

Perth Glory 2 - 0 **Melbourne Victory**
(De Vanna 81', Gill 87')

Saturday December 5, Clipsal Stadium.

Canberra student Luke Pilkington was crowned Melbourne Victory's first Football Superstar in the finale of FOX8's hit reality television series, earning himself a one-year Youth League contract with the club – which has since been extended for a further year.

The fairytale was complete when he made his debut against North Queensland in Townsville on Sunday, October 27, 2009. Pilkington also made 2 substitute appearances in Melbourne Victory's Asian Champions League campaign and has been given the opportunity to further impress in 2010/11.

Pilkington, 19, overcame Brisbane duo Christopher Kozionas and Jack Petrie to secure a spot in the Melbourne Victory Youth squad for 2009/10 and a scholarship with Monash University, Melbourne.

"Luke Pilkington is a very respectful, mature and enthusiastic footballer and person," Melbourne Victory Coach Ernie Merrick said.

"He brings many strengths to his football, he is technically very good, physically he has speed but also endurance and he is tactically knowledgeable.

"Luke is a left footer, which is hard to find, and he can play in a range of positions including left back and left midfield.

"He has a very bright future."

Pilkington made the journey from Canberra to Melbourne to commence his contract with Melbourne Victory in July 2009 and will continue studying for his sports science degree through his Monash University scholarship.

Football Superstar, hosted by singer/songwriter Brian McFadden and Fox Sports News presenter Lee Furlong, followed the journeys of 15 of Australia's finest young footballers as they competed for the opportunity of a lifetime.

Merrick headed up the judging panel alongside Melbourne Victory Assistant Coach Aaron Healey and Football Superstar mentor Vitale Ferrante, with the contestants put through their paces in a series of physical and mental challenges every week.

One by one the players were eliminated until Pilkington was anointed the ultimate winner and Australia's newest Football Superstar.

Season 2009/10 saw a strong increase in membership, with our total reaching 19,852 ticketed members. The support shown by these members is testament to their commitment and loyalty to our football club and is greatly appreciated.

We saw plenty of their passion during the year with continuous chants echoing across Etihad Stadium, with both active areas completely sold out. A special mention must go out to those who orchestrated and performed the first North, East, South, West chant during the home game against Gold Coast United, which was amazing.

For the first time, we implemented a Reward and Recognition program this season. The program provides additional benefits, but importantly acknowledgement for the term of commitment members have made to Melbourne Victory. This initiative will be a constant into the future and will enable members to continue to move up towards Gold status.

During the season, a number of events were conducted by our Membership Department, with the highlights being the 'Pre-Season Meet & Greet', the inaugural 'Silver Members' Function and the 'Kevin Muscat Clinic'.

The Pre-Season Meet and Greet gave our 'White Members' a chance to look at the match day inner sanctum. The day was held at Etihad Stadium and included a guided tour by players, unprecedented pitch access and a pep-talk in the rooms from Head Coach, Ernie Merrick.

The Silver Member's function made its debut. This is a new initiative that rewards our most loyal members for their commitment over 5 seasons. Chairman, Geoff Lord addressed the 900 strong gathering that converged on Etihad Stadium to celebrate the occasion. The highlight of the afternoon included an aerial photograph of all attendees.

Over 600 'Victory Army' and 'Generation V' junior members were centre stage at the annual Kevin Muscat Clinic, which took place at the Darebin International Sports Centre. This year, the weather gods blessed the event with gorgeous sunshine, after previous years' events had been hampered by rain. Players, children and parents alike all had a fantastic weekend participating in drills, games and an autograph signing session with the players.

As we look towards season 2010/11, it is viewed with much anticipation given our move to AAMI Park. In the preparation, the biggest challenge for the Membership Department has been the stadium transition process that has been undertaken. Over 16,000 people applied for seats and your patience was very much appreciated during this process.

It's now time to lock in your seats and experience the wonderful atmosphere and spectacle that AAMI Park will offer. Every voice from the terraces in 2010/11 will help Ernie and the boys in their quest to reclaim our place at the top of the table.

HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE

Staff Acknowledgement

Melbourne Victory Board

Geoff Lord, *Chairman*
Ron Peck
Richard Wilson
Anthony Di Pietro
Mario Biasin
John Harris
Ian McLeod
Peter Anastasiou
Harry Stamoulis

Melbourne Victory Administration Staff

Geoff Miles, *Chief Executive Officer*
Kelly Sedgeway, *Executive Assistant*
Trent Jacobs, *General Manager of Consumer Revenues, Marketing, and Communications*
Damien Souness, *Media and Communications Coordinator*
Fiona McNaught, *Marketing Manager*
Amanda Glossop, *Community Football Coordinator*
Adrian Lloyd, *Commercial Operations Manager*
Jim Christo, *Corporate Sales Manager*
Rebecca Ludbrook, *Sponsorship Account Executive*
Zoe Sakkos, *Commercial Operations Coordinator (to Dec 2010)*
Perri Thane, *Commercial Operations Coordinator*
Monica Dinh, *Membership Manager*
Ayman Harrak, *Membership Supervisor*
Josh Sadler, Membership Officer *(to Jan 2010)*
John Novak, *Membership Officer*
Natalie Moysey, *Office Coordinator*
Mitko Ristevski, *Accountant*

Administration Services

Max Events and Marketing
Soccer Fever
Silver Spoon Productions
Belgravia Group
Belgravia Leisure
Middletons

Melbourne Victory Football Staff

Full Time

Gary Cole, *Football Operations Manager*
Ernie Merrick, *Head Coach*
Aaron Healey, *Assistant Coach*
Kevin Muscat, *Assistant Coach*
Adam Basil, *Strength and Conditioning Coach*
Anita Pedrana, *Sports Scientist*
Steve Mautone, *Goalkeeping Coach, NYL Assistant Coach*
Mehmet Durakovic, *NYL Head Coach*
Daniel Jones, *Physiotherapist*
Ben Cukier, *Football Operations Coordinator*

Part Time

Semir Sivic, *Football Assistant*
Dr. Anik Shawdon, *Doctor*
Dr. Peter Harcourt, *Doctor*
Dr. Dan Bates, *NYL Doctor*
Sam Bugeja, *Physiotherapist*
Shane O'Sullivan, *Physiotherapist*
Michael Sette, *NYL Physiotherapist*
Patrick Farrell, *Sport Psychologist*
Brendan Hislop, *Massage Therapist*
Kathy Williams, *Massage Therapist*
Marisa Schurmann, *Massage Therapist*
Chloe Jordanou, *NYL Massage Therapist*
Cathryn Pruscino, *Video Analyst*
Sylvie Withers, *Video Analyst*
Claire Gelston, *Player Welfare*
Amber Rowell, *Sports Science Cadet*
Ryan Christian, *Sports Science Cadet*

Volunteers

John Curry - *Volunteers Coordinator*
Wamid Alansari, Steve Barlas, Lou Bavcar, Adam Bavcar, Domenic Boccari, Alf Buceto, Emilio Comito, Matthew Donato, Dez Donato, Pasquale Galati, David Interligi, Kon Kyranakis, George Mavrakis, David Milne, Fab Montagna, Adolf Mora, Jason Ripa, Frank Ripa, George Roufos, Mark Schembri, Cameron Smith, Greg Smith, Daniel Spakman, Haido Smyrnios, John Staios, Caroline Sterich, Antonio Sterich, Theo Tsafas, Stephen White, Joe Ziino.

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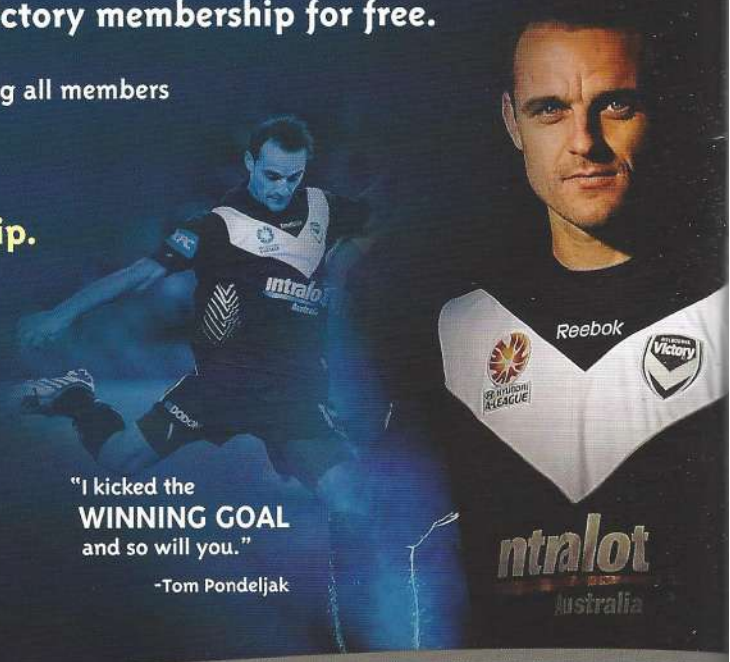

"I kicked the WINNING GOAL and so will you."
-Tom Pondeljak

allBanx

OPPONENT	DATE	KICK-OFF	HOME/ AWAY	VENUE
AUGUST				
Sydney FC	Sat, 7 Aug	8:00pm	Away	Sydney Football Stadium
Perth Glory	Sat, 14 Aug	7:30pm	Home	AAMI Park
North QLD Fury	Sun, 22 Aug	3.00pm	Home	AAMI Park
Gold Coast United	Sun, 29 Aug	3.00pm	Away	Skilled Park
SEPTEMBER				
Central Coast Mariners	Fri, 03 Sept	8.00pm	Away	Bluetongue Stadium
Brisbane Roar	Sun, 12 Sept	3.00pm	Home	AAMI Park
Wellington Phoenix	Wed, 15 Sept	7.30pm	Home	AAMI Park
North QLD Fury	Sat, 18 Sept	5.15pm	Away	Dairy Farmers Stadium
Newcastle Jets	Sat, 25 Sept	7.30pm	Away	EnergyAustralia Stadium
OCTOBER				
Melbourne Heart	Sat, 02 Oct	7.30pm	Away	AAMI Park
Sydney FC	Sat, 16 Oct	6.45pm	Home	Etihad Stadium
Brisbane Roar	Sat, 23 Oct	9.15pm	Away	Suncorp Stadium
Adelaide United	Fri, 29 Oct	8.00pm	Home	Etihad Stadium
NOVEMBER				
Gold Coast United	Sat, 06 Nov	7.00pm	Home	Etihad Stadium
Perth Glory	Sun, 14 Nov	7.00pm	Away	ME Bank Stadium
Central Coast Mariners	Thu, 18 Nov	7.30pm	Home	AAMI Park
Wellington Phoenix	Sat, 27 Nov	4.00pm	Away	Westpac Stadium
DECEMBER				
Brisbane Roar	Fri, 03 Dec	8.00pm	Home	AAMI Park
Melbourne Heart	Sat, 11 Dec	7.00pm	Away	AAMI Park
Perth Glory	Sat, 18 Dec	7.00pm	Home	AAMI Park
Newcastle Jets	Mon, 27 Dec	6.00pm	Home	AAMI Park
Central Coast Mariners	Fri, 31 Dec	6.00pm	Away	Bluetongue Stadium
JANUARY				
Wellington Phoenix	Wed, 05 Jan	5.30pm	Away	Westpac Stadium
Adelaide United	Sun, 09 Jan	3.00pm	Home	Etihad Stadium
Sydney FC	Sat, 15 Jan	7.30pm	Away	Sydney Football Stadium
Melbourne Heart	Sat, 22 Jan	7.00pm	Home	Etihad Stadium
North QLD Fury	Wed, 26 Jan	8.00pm	Away	Dairy Farmers Stadium
Gold Coast United	Sun, 30 Jan	5.00pm	Home	AAMI Park
FEBRUARY				
Newcastle Jets	Wed, 02 Feb	7.00pm	Home	AAMI Park
Adelaide United	Fri, 11 Feb	8.00pm	Away	Adelaide Oval

Melbourne Victory match fixtures are correct at the time of printing and are subject to change without notice. All times are AEST/AEDT

Think Smart. Play Smart.

INTRALOT

PROUDLY CONTINUES ITS PARTNERSHIP WITH MELBOURNE VICTORY IN 2010/11.

GO VICTORY!

Lucky Scratchies

Lucky Keno

Luckylines

Lucky Bingo Star

Lucky 3

Lucky 5 Red or Black

More winners, more often.

Melbourne Victory FC

intralot